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LIFE  
OF  
WILLIAM BLAKE.







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WILLIAM BLAKE





LIFE  
OF  
WILLIAM BLAKE

WITH SELECTIONS FROM HIS POEMS AND OTHER WRITINGS

BY

ALEXANDER GILCHRIST

OF THE MIDDLE TEMPLE, BARRISTER-AT-LAW  
AUTHOR OF "THE LIFE OF WILLIAM ETTY, R.A."

A NEW AND ENLARGED EDITION  
ILLUSTRATED FROM BLAKE'S OWN WORKS  
WITH ADDITIONAL LETTERS AND A MEMOIR OF THE AUTHOR

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOL. II

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*SELECTIONS.*

EDITED BY DANTE GABRIEL ROSSETTI.

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SONGS OF INNOCENCE AND OF EXPERIENCE.

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BY WILLIAM MICHAEL ROSSETTI.

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I

WILLIAM BLAKE



SELECTIONS

VOL. II.



I give you the end of a golden string;  
Only wind it into a ball,  
It will lead you in at Heaven's gate,  
Built in Jerusalem wall.

## SELECTIONS

EDITED BY

DANTE GABRIEL ROSSETTI.



## FROM THE POETICAL SKETCHES.

[PRINTED IN 1783. WRITTEN 1768—77. *ÆT.* II—20.]

THERE is no need for many further critical remarks on these selections from the Poetical Sketches, which have already been spoken of in Chap. VI. of the *Life*. Among the lyrical pieces here chosen, it would be difficult to award a distinct preference. These Songs are certainly among the small class of modern times which recall the best period of English song writing, whose rarest treasures lie scattered among the plays of our Elizabethan dramatists. They deserve no less than very high admiration in a quite positive sense, which cannot be even qualified by the slight, hasty, or juvenile imperfections of execution to be met with in some of them, though by no means in all. On the other hand, if we view them comparatively; in relation to Blake's youth when he wrote them, or the poetic epoch in which they were produced; it would be hardly possible to overrate their astonishing merit. The same return to the diction and high feeling of a greater age is to be found in the unfinished play of *Edward the Third*, from which some fragments are included here. In the original edition, however, these are marred by frequent imperfections in the metre (partly real and partly dependent on careless printing), which I have thought it best to remove, as I found it possible to do so without once, in the slightest degree, affecting the originality of the text. The same has been done in a few similar instances elsewhere. The poem of *Blind-man's Buff* stands in curious contrast with the rest, as an effort in another manner and, though less excellent, is not without interest. Besides what is here given, there are attempts in the very modern-antique style of ballad prevalent at the time, and in Ossianic prose, but all naturally very inferior, and probably earlier. It is singular that, for formed style and purely literary qualities, Blake, perhaps, never afterwards equalled the best things in this youthful volume, though he often did so in melody and feeling, and more than did so in depth of thought.



## SONG.

MY silks and fine array,  
My smiles and languished air,  
By love are driven away.  
And mournful lean Despair  
Brings me yew to deck my grave :  
Such end true lovers have.

His face is fair as heaven  
When springing buds unfold ;  
Oh, why to *him* was't given,  
Whose heart is wintry cold ?  
His breast is Love's all-worshipped tomb  
Where all Love's pilgrims come.

Bring me an axe and spade,  
Bring me a winding-sheet ;  
When I my grave have made,  
Let winds and tempests beat :  
Then down I'll lie, as cold as clay.  
True love doth pass away !

## SONG.

LOVE and harmony combine  
And around our souls entwine,  
While thy branches mix with mine  
And our roots together join.

Joys upon our branches sit,  
Chirping loud and singing sweet ;  
Like gentle streams beneath our feet,  
Innocence and virtue meet.

Thou the golden fruit dost bear,  
I am clad in flowers fair ;  
Thy sweet boughs perfume the air,  
And the turtle buildeth there.

There she sits and feeds her young ;  
Sweet I hear her mournful song :  
And thy lovely leaves among,  
There is Love : I hear his tongue.

There his charm'd nest he doth lay,  
There he sleeps the night away,  
There he sports along the day,  
And doth among our branches play.

## SONG.

I LOVE the jocund dance,  
The softly-breathing song,  
Where innocent eyes do glance,  
Where lisp the maiden's tongue.

I love the laughing vale,  
I love the echoing hill,  
Where mirth does never fail,  
And the jolly swain laughs his fill.

I love the pleasant cot,  
I love the innocent bower,  
Where white and brown is our lot,  
Or fruit in the mid-day hour.

I love the oaken seat  
Beneath the oaken tree,  
Where all the old villagers meet,  
And laugh our sports to see.

I love our neighbours all,  
But, Kitty, I better love thee :  
And love them I ever shall,  
But thou art all to me.



## MAD SONG.

THE wild winds weep,  
And the night is a-cold ;  
Come hither, Sleep,  
And my griefs unfold !  
But lo ! the Morning peeps  
Over the eastern steeps,  
And rustling birds of dawn  
The earth do scorn.

Lo ! to the vault  
Of paved heaven,  
With sorrow fraught,  
My notes are driven :  
They strike the ear of night,  
Make weep the eyes of day ;  
They make mad the roaring winds,  
And with tempests play.

Like a fiend in a cloud,  
With howling woe  
After night I do crowd,  
And with night will go ;  
I turn my back to the East  
Whence comforts have increas'd ;  
For light doth seize my brain  
With frantic pain.

## SONG.

HOW sweet I roamed from field to field,  
And tasted all the summer's pride,  
'Till I the Prince of Love beheld,  
Who in the sunny beams did glide!

He show'd me lilies for my hair,  
And blushing roses for my brow ;  
He led me through his gardens fair,  
Where all his golden pleasures grow.

With sweet May dews my wings were wet,  
And Phœbus fired my vocal rage ;  
He caught me in his silken net,  
And shut me in his golden cage.

He loves to sit and hear me sing,  
Then, laughing, sports and plays with me ;  
Then stretches out my golden wing,  
And mocks my loss of liberty.

## SONG.

MEMORY, hither come,  
And tune your merry notes ;  
And, while upon the wind  
Your music floats,  
I'll pore upon the stream  
Where sighing lovers dream,  
And fish for fancies as they pass  
Within the watery glass.

I'll drink of the clear stream,  
And hear the linnet's song ;  
And there I'll lie and dream  
The day along :  
And, when night comes, I'll go  
To places fit for woe ;  
Walking along the darkened valley  
With silent Melancholy.

## TO THE MUSES.

WHETHER on Ida's shady brow,  
Or in the chambers of the East,  
The chambers of the sun that now  
From ancient melody have ceased ;

Whether in Heaven ye wander fair,  
Or the green corners of the earth,  
Or the blue regions of the air,  
Where the melodious winds have birth ;

Whether on crystal rocks ye rove  
Beneath the bosom of the sea,  
Wandering in many a coral grove ;  
Fair Nine, forsaking Poetry ;

How have you left the ancient love  
That bards of old enjoy'd in you !  
The languid strings do scarcely move,  
The sound is forced, the notes are few.

## TO THE EVENING STAR.

THOU fair-hair'd angel of the Evening,  
Now, whilst the sun rests on the mountains, light  
Thy brilliant torch of love; thy radiant crown  
Put on, and smile upon our evening bed!  
Smile on our loves; and whilst thou drawest round  
The curtains of the sky, scatter thy dew  
On every flower that closes its sweet eyes  
In timely sleep. Let thy west wind sleep on  
The lake; speak silence with thy glimmering eyes,  
And wash the dusk with silver. Soon, full soon  
Dost thou withdraw; then the wolf rages wide,  
And then the lion glares through the dun forest.  
The fleeces of our flocks are covered with  
Thy sacred dew: protect them with thine influence.

## TO SPRING.

O THOU, with dewy locks, who lookest down  
Thro' the clear windows of the morning, turn  
Thine angel eyes upon our western isle,  
Which in full choir hails thy approach, 'O Spring !

The hills do tell each other, and the listening  
Valleys hear ; all our longing eyes are turned  
Up to thy bright pavilion : issue forth,  
And let thy holy feet visit our clime !

Come o'er the eastern hills, and let our winds  
Kiss thy perfumèd garments ; let us taste  
Thy morn and evening breath ; scatter thy pearls  
Upon our love-sick land that mourns for thee.

O deck her forth with thy fair fingers ; pour  
Thy softest kisses on her bosom, and put  
Thy golden crown upon her languish'd head  
Whose modest tresses were bound up for thee.

## TO SUMMER.

O THOU who passest thro' our valleys in  
Thy strength, curb thy fierce steeds, allay the heat  
That flames from their large nostrils! Thou, O Summer!  
Oft pitched'st here thy golden tent, and oft  
Beneath our oaks hast slept, while we beheld  
With joy thy ruddy limbs and flourishing hair.

Beneath our thickest shades we oft have heard  
Thy voice, when Noon upon his fervid car  
Rode o'er the deep of heaven. Beside our springs  
Sit down, and in our mossy valleys; on  
Some bank beside a river clear, throw all  
Thy draperies off, and rush into the stream!  
Our valleys love the Summer in his pride.

Our bards are famed who strike the silver wire;  
Our youths are bolder than the southern swains;  
Our maidens fairer in the sprightly dance;  
We lack not songs, nor instruments of joy,  
Nor echoes sweet, nor waters clear as heaven,  
Nor laurel-wreaths against the sultry heat.

## BLIND-MAN'S BUFF.

WHEN silver snow decks Susan's clothes,  
And jewel hangs at th' shepherd's nose,  
The blushing bank is all my care,  
With hearth so red and walls so fair ;  
'Heap the sea-coal, come, heap it higher,  
'The oaken log lay on the fire.'  
The well-washed stools, a circling row,  
With lad and lass, how fair the show !  
The merry can of nut-brown ale,  
The laughing jest, the love-sick tale :  
'Till, tired of chat, the game begins,  
The lasses prick the lads with pins ;  
Roger from Dolly twitched the stool,  
She falling, kissed the ground, poor fool !  
She blushed so red, with side-long glance  
At hob-nail Dick who grieved the chance.  
But now for Blind-man's Buff they call ;  
Of each incumbrance clear the hall !

Jenny her silken 'kerchief folds,  
And blear-eyed Will the black lot holds ;  
Now, laughing, stops, with 'Silence ! hush !'  
And Peggy Pout gives Sam a push.  
The Blind-man's arms, extended wide,  
Sam slips between ;—O woe betide  
Thee, clumsy Will !—but tittering Kate



Is penned up in the corner strait !  
And now Will's eyes beheld the play,  
He thought his face was t'other way.  
Now, Kitty, now ! what chance hast thou !  
Roger so near thee trips !—I vow  
She catches him !—then Roger ties  
His own head up, but not his eyes ;  
For thro' the slender cloth he sees,  
And runs at Sam, who slips with ease  
His clumsy hold ; and, dodging round,  
Sukey is tumbled on the ground !  
See what it is to play unfair !  
Where cheating is, there's mischief there.  
But Roger still pursues the chase,—  
'He sees ! he sees !' cries softly Grace.  
O Roger, thou, unskilled in art,  
Must, surer bound, go through thy part !

Now Kitty, pert, repeats the rhymes,  
And Roger turns him round three times ;  
Then pauses ere he starts—But Dick  
Was mischief-bent upon a trick :  
Down on his hands and knees he lay,  
Directly in the Blind-man's way—  
Then cries out, ' Hem ! ' Hodge heard and ran  
With hood-winked chance—sure of his man ;  
But down he came.—Alas, how frail  
Our best of hopes, how soon they fail !  
With crimson drops he stains the ground,  
Confusion startles all around !  
Poor piteous Dick supports his head,  
And fain would cure the hurt he made ;  
But Kitty hastens with a key,  
And down his back they straight convey  
The cold relief ; the blood is stay'd,  
And Hodge again holds up his head.

Such are the fortunes of the game ;  
And those who play should stop the same  
By wholesome laws : such as,—all those  
Who on the blinded man impose  
Stand in his stead. So, long a-gone,`  
When men were first a nation grown,  
Lawless they lived, till wantonness  
And liberty began to increase,  
And one man lay in another's way :  
Then laws were made to keep fair play.

## KING EDWARD THE THIRD.

(SELECTIONS.)

SCENE I.—*The coast of France: KING EDWARD and Nobles before it; the Army.*

. . . . .

*King.* . . . . Our names are written equal  
 In Fame's wide-trophied halls; 'tis ours to gild  
 The letters, and to make them shine with gold  
 That never tarnishes: whether Third Edward,  
 Or Prince of Wales or Montacute or Mortimer,  
 Or e'en the least by birth, gain brightest fame,  
 Is in His hand to whom all men are equal.  
 The world of men is like the numerous stars  
 That beam and twinkle in the depth of night,  
 Each clad in glory according to his sphere:—  
 But we that wander from our native seats, ;  
 And beam forth lustre on a darkling world,  
 Grow larger as we advance; and some, perhaps  
 The most obscure at home, that scarce were seen  
 To twinkle in their sphere, may so advance  
 That the astonish'd world, with upturn'd eyes,  
 Regardless of the moon and those once bright,  
 Stand only but to gaze upon *their* splendour.

[*He here knights the Prince and other young Nobles.*

Now let us take a just revenge for those  
 Brave lords who fell beneath the bloody axe

At Paris. Noble Harcourt, thanks, for 'twas  
 By your advice we landed here in Brittany,  
 A country not as yet sown with destruction,  
 And where the fiery whirlwind of swift war  
 Hath not yet swept its desolating wing.  
 Into three parties we divide by day,  
 And separate march, but join again at night:  
 Each knows his rank, and Heaven marshals all. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—*At Cressy. The KING and SIR THOMAS  
 DAGWORTH. The PRINCE OF WALES and SIR JOHN  
 CHANDOS.*

*King.* What can Sir Thomas Dagworth  
 Request that Edward can refuse?

*Dagw.* I hope  
 Your majesty cannot refuse so mere  
 A trifle: I've gilt your cause with my best blood,  
 And would again, were I not now forbid  
 By him whom I am bound to obey. My hands  
 Are tied up, all my courage shrunk and wither'd,  
 My sinews slacken'd, and my voice scarce heard:  
 Therefore I beg I may return to England.

*King.* I know not what you could have ask'd, Sir Thomas,  
 That I would not have sooner parted with  
 Than such a soldier as you, and such a friend;  
 Nay, I will know the most remote particulars  
 Of this your strange petition, that if I can  
 I still may keep you here.

*Dagw.* Here on the fields of Cressy we are settled,  
 'Till Philip spring the timorous covey again.  
 The wolf is hunted down by causeless fear;  
 The lion flees, and fear usurps his heart,  
 Startled, astonish'd at the clamorous cock.

The eagle that doth gaze upon the sun  
 Fears the small fire that plays about the fen ;  
 If at this moment of their idle fear  
 The dog seize the wolf, the forester the lion,  
 The negro, in the crevice of the rock,  
 Seize on the soaring eagle, undone by flight  
 They tame submit—such the effect flight has  
 On noble souls. Now hear its opposite :  
 The timorous stag starts from the thicket wild,  
 The fearful crane springs from the plashy fen,  
 The shining snake glides o'er the bending grass :  
 The stag turns head, and bays the crying hounds,  
 The crane o'ertaken fighteth with the hawk,  
 The snake doth turn and bite the padding foot.  
 And if your majesty's afraid of Philip,  
 You are more like a lion than a crane :  
 Therefore I beg I may return to England.

*King.* Sir Thomas, now I understand your mirth,  
 Which often plays with wisdom for its pastime,  
 And brings good counsel from the breast of laughter.  
 I hope you'll stay, and see us fight this battle,—  
 And reap rich harvest in the field of Cressy,  
 Then go to England, tell them how we fight,  
 And set all hearts on fire to be with us.  
 Philip is plum'd, and thinks we flee from him,  
 Else he would never dare to attack us. Now,  
 Now is the quarry set! and Death doth sport  
 In the bright sunshine of this fatal day.

*Dagw.* Now my heart dances, and I am as light  
 As the young bridegroom going to be married.  
 Now must I to my soldiers, get them ready,  
 Furbish our armours bright, new plume our helms,  
 And we will sing like the young housewives busied  
 In the dairy. Now my feet are wing'd, but not  
 For flight, an 't please your grace.

*King.* If all my soldiers are as pleased as you,

'Twill be a gallant thing to fight or die.

Then I can never be afraid of Philip.

*Dagw.* A rawbon'd fellow t'other day pass'd by me;

I told him to put off his hungry looks;

He said: 'I hunger for another battle.'

I saw a Welshman with a fiery face:

I told him that he look'd like a candle half

Burn'd out. He answer'd he was 'pig enough

To light another pattle.' Last night beneath

The moon I walk'd abroad when all had pitch'd

Their tents, and all were still:

I heard a blooming youth singing a song

He had compos'd, and at each pause he wip'd

His dropping eyes. The ditty wás,—'If he

Return'd victorious he should wed a maiden

Fairer than snow and rich as midsummer.'

Another wept, and wish'd health to his father.

I chid them both, but gave them noble hopes.

These are the minds that glory in the battle,

And leap and dance to hear the trumpet sound.

*King.* Sir Thomas Dagworth, be thou near our person:

Thy heart is richer than the vales of France;

I will not part with such a man as thou.

If Philip came arm'd in the ribs of death,

And shook his mortal dart against my head,

Thou'dst laugh his fury into nerveless shame!

Go now, for thou art suited to the work,

Throughout the camp; inflame the timorous,

Blow up the sluggish into ardour, and

Confirm the strong with strength, the weak inspire,

And wing their brows with hope and expectation:

Then to our tent return, and meet the Council.

[*Exit* DAGWORTH.]

*Prince.* Now we are alone, Sir John, I will unburthen  
And breathe my hopes into the burning air,

Where thousand deaths are posting up and down,  
Commission'd to this fatal field of Cressy.  
Methinks I see them arm my gallant soldiers,  
And gird the sword upon each thigh, and fit  
Each shining helm, and string each stubborn bow,  
And dance unto the neighing of our steeds:  
Methinks the shout begins, the battle burns;  
Methinks I see them perch on English crests,  
And roar the wild flame of fierce war upon  
The thronged enemy. In truth, I am too full;  
It is my sin to love the noise of war.  
Chandos, thou seest my weakness; for strong Nature  
Will bend or break us. My blood like a spring-tide  
Does rise so high to overflow all bounds  
Of moderation; while Reason in her  
Frail bark can see no shore or bound for vast  
Ambition. Come then, take the helm, my Chandos,  
That my full-blown sails overset me not  
In the wild tempest; condemn my venturous youth  
That plays with danger as the innocent child,  
Unthinking, plays upon the viper's den:  
I am a coward in my reason, Chandos.

*Chandos.* You are a man, my Prince, and a brave man,  
If I can judge of actions; but your heat  
Is the effect of youth and want of use;  
Use makes the armed field and noisy war  
Pass over as a cloud does, unregarded,  
Or but expected as a thing of course.  
Age is contemplative; each rolling year  
Doth bring forth fruit to the mind's treasure-house;  
While vacant Youth doth crave and seek about  
Within itself, and findeth discontent;  
Then, tir'd of thought, impatient takes the wing,  
Seizes the fruits of Time, attacks Experience,  
Roams round vast Nature's forest, where no bounds  
Are set; the swiftest may have room, the strongest

Find prey; till, tir'd at length, sated and tir'd  
With the still changing sameness, old variety,  
We sit us down, and view our former joys  
As worthless.

*Prince.* Then, if we must tug for experience,  
Let us not fear to beat round Nature's wilds  
And rouse the strongest prey; then if we fall,  
We fall with glory: for I know the wolf  
Is dangerous to fight, not good for food,  
Nor is the hide a comely vestment; so  
We have our battle for our pains. I know  
That youth has need of age to point fit prey,  
And oft the stander-by shall steal the fruit  
Of the other's labour. This is philosophy;  
These are the tricks of the world; but the pure soul  
Shall mount on wings, disdaining little sport,  
And cut a path into the heaven of glory,  
Leaving a track of light for men to wonder at.  
I'm glad my father does not hear me talk:  
You can find friendly excuses for me, Chandos;  
But, do you not think, Sir John, that if it please  
The Almighty to stretch out my span of life  
I shall with pleasure view a glorious action  
Which my youth master'd?

*Chand.* Age, my lord, views motives,  
And views not acts. When neither warbling voice  
Nor trilling pipe is heard, nor pleasure sits  
With trembling age, the voice of Conscience, then  
Sweeter than music in a summer's eve,  
Shall warble round the snowy head, and keep  
Sweet symphony to feather'd angels sitting  
As guardians round your chair; then shall the pulse  
Beat slow; and taste and touch, sight, sound, and smell,  
That sing and dance round Reason's fine-wrought throne,  
Shall flee away, and leave him all forlorn—  
Yet not forlorn if Conscience is his friend. [*Exeunt.*



SCENE V.—*In SIR THOMAS DAGWORTH'S Tent. To him enters SIR WALTER MANNY.*

*Sir Walter.* Sir Thomas Dagworth, I have been a-weeping  
Over the men that are to die to-day.

*Dagw.* Why, brave Sir Walter, you or I may fall.

*Sir Walter.* I know this breathing flesh must lie and rot  
Cover'd with silence and forgetfulness.—  
Death wons in cities' smoke, and in still night,  
When men sleep in their beds, walketh about!  
How many in walled cities lie and groan,  
Turning themselves about upon their beds,  
Talking with Death, answering his hard demands!  
How many walk in darkness, terrors around  
The curtains of their beds, destruction still  
Ready without the door! how many sleep  
In earth, cover'd with stones and deathly dust,  
Resting in quietness, whose spirits walk  
Upon the clouds of heaven, to die no more!  
Yet death is terrible, though on angels' wings:  
How terrible, then, is the field of death!  
Where he doth rend the vault of heav'n, and shake  
The gates of hell! Oh, Dagworth! France is sick:  
The very sky, tho' sunshine light it, seems  
To me as pale as the pale fainting man  
On his death-bed, whose face is shown by light  
Of sickly taper! It makes me sad and sick  
At very heart. Thousands must fall to-day.

*Dagw.* Thousands of souls must leave this prison house  
To be exalted to those heavenly fields,

Where songs of triumph, palms of victory,  
Where peace, and joy, and love, and calm content  
Sit singing in the azure clouds, and strew  
Flowers of heaven's growth over the banquet table.  
Bind ardent Hope upon your feet like shoes,  
Put on the robe of preparation,  
The table is prepar'd in shining heav'n,  
The flowers of immortality are blown ;  
Let those that fight fight in good steadfastness,  
And those that fall shall rise in victory.

*Sir Walter.* I've often seen the burning field of war  
And often heard the dismal clang of arms ;  
But never, till this fatal day of Cressy,  
Has my soul fainted with these views of death.  
I seem to be in one great charnel-house,  
And seem to scent the rotten carcasses !  
I seem to hear the dismal yells of Death,  
While the black gore drops from his horrid jaws ;  
Yet I not fear the monster in his pride.—  
But oh, the souls that are to die to-day !

*Dagw.* Stop, brave Sir Walter, let me drop a tear,  
Then let the clarion of war begin ;  
I'll fight and weep ! 'tis in my country's cause ;  
I'll weep and shout for glorious liberty.  
Grim War shall laugh and shout, bedeck'd in tears,  
And blood shall flow like streams across the meadows,  
That murmur down their pebbly channels, and  
Spend their sweet lives to do their country service.  
Then England's leaves shall shoot, her fields shall smile,  
Her ships shall sing across the foaming sea,  
Her mariners shall use the flute and viol,  
And rattling guns and black and dreary war  
Shall be no more.

*Sir Walter.* Well, let the trumpet sound and the  
drum beat ;  
Let war stain the blue heavens with bloody banners.

I'll draw my sword, nor ever sheath it up,  
Till England blow the trump of victory,  
Or I lie stretch'd upon the field of death. *[Exeunt.]*

SCENE VI.—*In the Camp. Several of the Warriors met in the King's Tent. A Minstrel sings.*

O Sons of Trojan Brutus, cloth'd in war,  
Whose voices are the thunder of the field.

Your ancestors came from the fires of Troy,  
(Like lions rous'd by lightning from their dens,  
Whose eyes do glare against the stormy fires,)  
Heated with war, fill'd with the blood of Greeks,  
With helmets hewn, and shields covered with gore,  
In navies black, broken with wind and tide.

They landed in firm array upon the rocks  
Of Albion; they kiss'd the rocky shore:  
'Be thou our mother and our nurse,' they said,  
'Our children's mother; and thou shalt be our grave,  
'The sepulchre of ancient Troy, from whence  
'Shall rise cities, and thrones, and awful powers.'

Our fathers swarm from the ships. Giant voices  
Are heard from out the hills; the enormous sons  
Of Ocean run from rocks and caves: wild men,  
Naked, and roaring like lions, hurling rocks,  
And wielding knotty clubs, like oaks entangled,  
Thick as a forest ready for the axe.

Our fathers move in firm array to battle ;  
The savage monsters rush like roaring fire,  
Like as a forest roars with crackling flames,  
When the red lightning borne by furious storms

Lights on some woody shore, and the parch'd heavens  
Rain fire into the molten raging sea.

Our fathers, sweating, lean on their spears and view  
The mighty dead: giant bodies streaming blood,  
Dread visages frowning in silent death.

Then Brutus speaks, inspired; our fathers sit  
Attentive on the melancholy shore.

Hear ye the voice of Brutus:—‘The flowing waves  
‘Of Time come rolling o’er my breast,’ he said,  
‘And my heart labours with futurity.  
‘Our sons shall rule the empire of the sea,  
‘Their mighty wings shall stretch from east to west;  
‘Their nest is in the sea, but they shall roam  
‘Like eagles for their prey . . .

‘Our sons shall rise from thrones in joy, each one  
‘Buckling his armour on; Morning shall be  
‘Prevented by the gleaming of their swords,  
‘And Evening hear their song of victory.

‘Freedom shall stand upon the cliffs of Albion,  
‘Casting her blue eyes over the green ocean;  
‘Or, towering, stand upon the roaring waves,  
‘Stretching her mighty spear o’er distant lands,  
‘While with her eagle wings she covereth  
‘Fair Albion’s shore and all her families.’





# SONGS OF INNOCENCE

AND

## SONGS OF EXPERIENCE.

[ENGRAVED 1789.]

HERE again but little need be added to what has already been said in the *Life* respecting the *Songs of Innocence and Experience*. The first series is incomparably the more beautiful of the two, being indeed almost flawless in essential respects; while in the second series, the five years intervening between the two had proved sufficient for obscurity and the darker mental phases of Blake's writings to set in and greatly mar its poetic value. This contrast is more especially evident in those pieces whose subjects tally in one and the other series. For instance, there can be no comparison between the first *Chimney Sweeper*, which touches with such perfect simplicity the true pathetic chord of its subject, and the second, tinged somewhat with the commonplaces, if also with the truths, of social discontent. However, very perfect and noble examples of Blake's metaphysical poetry occur among the *Songs of Experience*, such as *Christian Forbearance*, and *The Human Abstract*. One piece, the second *Cradle Song*, I have myself introduced from the MS. note-book often referred to, since there can be no doubt that it was written to match with the first, and it has quite sufficient beauty to give it a right to its natural place. A few alterations and additions in other poems have been made from the same source.



## INTRODUCTION.

PIPING down the valleys wild,  
Piping songs of pleasant glee,  
On a cloud I saw a child,  
And he, laughing, said to me:

‘Pipe a song about a Lamb!’  
So I piped with merry cheer.  
‘Piper, pipe that song again;’  
So I piped: he wept to hear.

‘Drop thy pipe, thy happy pipe;  
Sing thy songs of happy cheer!’  
So I sang the same again,  
While he wept with joy to hear.

‘Piper, sit thee down and write  
In a book, that all may read.’  
So he vanish’d from my sight,  
And I plucked a hollow reed,

And I made a rural pen,  
And I stain’d the water clear,  
And I wrote my happy songs,  
Every child may joy to hear.



## THE SHEPHERD.

How sweet is the shepherd's sweet lot!  
From the morn to the evening he strays;  
He shall follow his sheep all the day,  
And his tongue shall be filled with praise.

For he hears the lambs' innocent call,  
And he hears the ewes' tender reply;  
He is watchful while they are in peace,  
For they know that their shepherd is nigh.

## THE ECHOING GREEN.

THE sun does arise  
And make happy the skies ;  
The merry bells ring  
To welcome the spring ;  
The skylark and thrush,  
The birds of the bush,  
Sing louder around  
To the bells' cheerful sound ;  
While our sports shall be seen  
On the echoing green.

Old John with white hair,  
Does laugh away care,  
Sitting under the oak,  
Among the old folk.  
They laugh at our play,  
And soon they all say,  
' Such, such were the joys  
When we all—girls and boys—  
In our youth-time were seen  
On the echoing green.'

Till the little ones, weary,  
No more can be merry,  
The sun does descend,  
And our sports have an end.  
Round the laps of their mothers  
Many sisters and brothers,  
Like birds in their nest,  
Are ready for rest,  
And sport no more seen  
On the darkening green.

## THE LAMB.

LITTLE lamb, who made thee?  
Dost thou know who made thee?  
Gave thee life, and bade thee feed  
By the stream and o'er the mead;  
Gave thee clothing of delight,  
Softest clothing, woolly, bright;  
Gave thee such a tender voice,  
Making all the vales rejoice?  
Little lamb, who made thee?  
Dost thou know who made thee?

Little lamb, I'll tell thee;  
Little lamb, I'll tell thee:  
He 'is called by thy name,  
For He calls Himself a Lamb.  
He is meek, and He is mild,  
He became a little child.  
I a child, and thou a lamb,  
We are called by His name.  
Little lamb, God bless thee!  
Little lamb, God bless thee!

## THE LITTLE BLACK BOY.

My mother bore me in the southern wild,  
And I am black, but O, my soul is white.  
White as an angel is the English child,  
But I am black, as if bereaved of light.

My mother taught me underneath a tree,  
And, sitting down before the heat of day,  
She took me on her lap and kissèd me,  
And, pointing to the East, began to say :

‘Look on the rising sun : there God does live,  
And gives His light, and gives His heat away,  
And flowers and trees and beasts and men receive  
Comfort in morning, joy in the noonday.

‘And we are put on earth a little space,  
That we may learn to bear the beams of love ;  
And these black bodies and this sunburnt face  
Are but a cloud, and like a shady grove.

‘For when our souls have learn’d the heat to bear,  
The cloud will vanish, we shall hear His voice,  
Saying “Come out from the grove, my love and care,  
And round my golden tent like lambs rejoice.”’

Thus did my mother say, and kissèd me,  
And thus I say to little English boy :  
When I from black, and he from white cloud free,  
And round the tent of God like lambs we joy ;

I’ll shade him from the heat till he can bear  
To lean in joy upon our Father’s knee ;  
And then I’ll stand and stroke his silver hair,  
And be like him, and he will then love me.

## THE BLOSSOM.

MERRY, merry sparrow !  
Under leaves so green  
    A happy blossom  
Sees you, swift as arrow,  
Seek your cradle narrow,  
    Near my bosom.

Pretty, pretty robin !  
Under leaves so green  
    A happy blossom  
Hears you sobbing, sobbing,  
Pretty, pretty robin,  
    Near my bosom.

## THE CHIMNEY-SWEEPER.

WHEN my mother died I was very young,  
And my father sold me while yet my tongue  
Could scarcely cry, 'Weep! weep! weep! weep!'  
So your chimneys I sweep, and in soot I sleep.

There's little Tom Dacre, who cried when his head,  
That curled like a lamb's back, was shaved; so I said,  
'Hush, Tom! never mind it, for when your head's bare,  
You know that the soot cannot spoil your white hair.'

And so he was quiet, and that very night,  
As Tom was a-sleeping, he had such a sight;  
That thousands of sweepers, Dick, Joe, Ned, and Jack,  
Were all of them lock'd up in coffins of black.

And by came an angel, who had a bright key,  
And he opened the coffins, and set them all free;  
Then down a green plain, leaping, laughing, they run,  
And wash in a river, and shine in the sun.

Then naked and white, all their bags left behind,  
They rise upon clouds, and sport in the wind;  
And the angel told Tom, if he'd be a good boy,  
He'd have God for his father, and never want joy.

And so Tom awoke, and we rose in the dark,  
And got with our bags and our brushes to work;  
Though the morning was cold, Tom was happy and warm:  
So, if all do their duty, they need not fear harm.

## THE LITTLE BOY LOST.

FATHER, father, where are you going?  
O do not walk so fast;  
Speak, father, speak to your little boy,  
Or else I shall be lost.

The night was dark, no father was there,  
The child was wet with dew;  
The mire was deep, and the child did weep,  
And away the vapour flew.

## THE LITTLE BOY FOUND.

THE little boy lost in the lonely fen,  
Led by the wandering light,  
Began to cry, but God, ever nigh,  
Appeared like his father, in white.

He kissed the child, and by the hand led,  
And to his mother brought,  
Who in sorrow pale through the lonely dale  
The little boy weeping sought.

## LAUGHING SONG.

WHEN the green woods laugh with the voice of joy,  
And the dimpling stream runs laughing by ;  
When the air does laugh with our merry wit,  
And the green hill laughs with the noise of it ;

When the meadows laugh with lively green,  
And the grasshopper laughs in the merry scene ;  
When Mary, and Susan, and Emily,  
With their sweet round mouths, sing 'Ha, ha, he !'

When the painted birds laugh in the shade,  
Where our table with cherries and nuts is spread :  
Come live, and be merry, and join with me,  
To sing the sweet chorus of 'Ha, ha, he !'



## A CRADLE SONG.

SWEET dreams, form a shade  
O'er my lovely infant's head !  
Sweet dreams of pleasant streams  
By happy, silent, moony beams !

Sweet sleep, with soft down  
Weave thy brows an infant crown !  
Sweet sleep, angel mild,  
Hover o'er my happy child !

Sweet smiles, in the night  
Hover over my delight !  
Sweet smiles, mother's smile,  
All the livelong night beguile !

Sweet moans, dovelike sighs,  
Chase not slumber from thine eyes !  
Sweet moan, sweeter smile  
All the dovelike moans beguile !

Sleep, sleep, happy child !  
All creation slept and smiled.  
Sleep, sleep, happy sleep !  
While o'er thee doth mother weep.

Sweet babe, in thy face  
Holy image I can trace ;  
Sweet babe, once like thee  
Thy Maker lay, and wept for me !

Wept for me, for thee, for all,  
When He was an infant small.  
Thou His image ever see,  
Heavenly face that smiles on thee!

Smiles on thee, on me, on all,  
Who became an infant small;  
Infant smiles like His own smile  
Heaven and earth to peace beguile.

## THE DIVINE IMAGE.

To mercy, pity, peace, and love,  
All pray in their distress,  
And to these virtues of delight  
Return their thankfulness.

For mercy, pity, peace, and love,  
Is God our Father dear ;  
And mercy, pity, peace, and love,  
Is man, His child and care.

For Mercy has a human heart,  
Pity a human face ;  
And Love, the human form divine ;  
And Peace, the human dress.

Then every man, of every clime,  
That prays in his distress,  
Prays to the human form divine :  
Love, Mercy, Pity, Peace.

And all must love the human form,  
In heathen, Turk, or Jew ;  
Where mercy, love, and pity dwell,  
There God is dwelling too.

## HOLY THURSDAY.

'Twas on a Holy Thursday, their innocent faces clean,  
Came children walking two and two, in red, and blue,  
and green:  
Grey-headed beadles walk'd before, with wands as white  
as snow,  
Till into the high dome of Paul's, they like [Thames'  
waters flow.

O what a multitude they seem'd, these flowers of London  
town,  
Seated in companies they were, with radiance all their  
own:  
The hum of multitudes was there, but multitudes of lambs,  
Thousands of little boys and girls raising their innocent  
hands.

Now like a mighty wind they raise to heaven the voice  
of song,  
Or like harmonious thunderings the seats of heaven among:  
Beneath them sit the aged men, wise guardians of the poor.  
Then cherish pity, lest you drive an angel from your door.

## NIGHT.

THE sun descending in the west,  
The evening star does shine,  
The birds are silent in their nest,  
And I must seek for mine.

The moon, like a flower  
In heaven's high bower,  
With silent delight,  
Sits and smiles on the night.

Farewell, green fields and happy grove,  
Where flocks have ta'en delight ;  
Where lambs have nibbled, silent move  
The feet of angels bright ;  
Unseen, they pour blessing,  
And joy without ceasing,  
On each bud and blossom,  
And each sleeping bosom.

They look in every thoughtless nest,  
Where birds are covered warm ;  
They visit caves of every beast,  
To keep them all from harm :  
If they see any weeping  
That should have been sleeping,  
They pour sleep on their head,  
And sit down by their bed.

When wolves and tigers howl for prey,  
They pitying stand and weep ;  
Seeking to drive their thirst away,  
And keep them from the sheep.

But if they rush dreadful,  
The angels, most heedful,  
Receive each mild spirit,  
New worlds to inherit.

And there the lion's ruddy eyes  
Shall flow with tears of gold :  
And pitying the tender cries,  
And walking round the fold :

Saying : ' Wrath by his meekness,  
And by His health, sickness,  
Are driven away  
From our immortal day.

' And now beside thee, bleating lamb,  
I can lie down and sleep,  
Or think on Him who bore thy name,  
Graze after thee, and weep.

For wash'd in life's river,  
My bright mane for ever  
Shall shine like the gold,  
As I guard o'er the fold.'

## SPRING.

SOUND the flute !  
Now 'tis mute ;  
Birds delight,  
Day and night,  
Nightingale  
In the dale,  
Lark in sky,—  
Merrily,  
Merrily, merrily to welcome in the year.

Little boy,  
Full of joy ;  
Little girl,  
Sweet and small ;  
Cock does crow,  
So do you ;  
Merry voice,  
Infant noise ;  
Merrily, merrily to welcome in the year.

Little lamb,  
Here I am ;  
Come and lick  
My white neck ;  
Let me pull  
Your soft wool ;  
Let me kiss  
Your soft face ;  
Merrily, merrily we welcome in the year.

## NURSE'S SONG.

WHEN the voices of children are heard on the green,  
And laughing is heard on the hill,  
My heart is at rest within my breast,  
And everything else is still.  
Then come home, my children, the sun is gone down,  
And the dews of night arise;  
Come, come, leave off play, and let us away  
Till the morning appears in the skies.

No, no, let us play, for it is yet day,  
And we cannot go to sleep;  
Besides, in the sky the little birds fly,  
And the hills are all covered with sheep.  
Well, well, go and play till the light fades away,  
And then go home to bed.  
The little ones leap'd, and shouted, and laugh'd,  
And all the hills echoèd.



## INFANT JOY.

' I HAVE no name ;  
I am but two days old.'  
What shall I call thee ?  
' I happy am,  
Joy is my name.'  
Sweet joy befall thee !

Pretty joy !  
Sweet joy, but two days old.  
Sweet joy I call thee :  
Thou dost smile.  
I sing the while,  
Sweet joy befall thee !

## A DREAM.

ONCE a dream did weave a shade  
O'er my angel-guarded bed,  
That an emmet lost its way  
Where on grass methought I lay.

Troubled, 'wilder'd, and forlorn,  
Dark, benighted, travel-worn,  
Over many a tangled spray,  
All heart-broke, I heard her say :

' O, my children ! do they cry,  
Do they hear their father sigh ?  
Now they look abroad to see,  
Now return and weep for me.'

Pitying, I dropp'd a tear :  
But I saw a glow-worm near,  
Who replied, 'What wailing wight  
Calls the watchman of the night ?

' I am set to light the ground,  
While the beetle goes his round.  
Follow now the beetle's hum,  
Little wanderer, hie thee home !'

## ON ANOTHER'S SORROW.

CAN I see another's woe,  
And not be in sorrow too?  
Can I see another's grief,  
And not seek for kind relief?

Can I see a falling tear,  
And not feel my sorrows share?  
Can a father see his child  
Weep, nor be with sorrow fill'd?

Can a mother sit and hear,  
An infant groan, an infant fear?  
No, no! never can it be!  
Never, never can it be!

And can He, who smiles on all,  
Hear the wren, with sorrows small,  
Hear the small bird's grief and care,  
Hear the woes that infants bear?

And not sit beside the nest,  
Pouring Pity in their breast?  
And not sit the cradle near,  
Weeping tear on infant's tear?

And not sit both night and day,  
Wiping all our tears away?  
Oh, no! never can it be!  
Never, never can it be!

He doth give His joy to all:  
He becomes an infant small,  
He becomes a man of woe,  
He doth feel the sorrow too.

Think not thou canst sigh a sigh,  
And thy Maker is not by:  
Think not thou canst weep a tear,  
And thy Maker is not near.

Oh! He gives to us His joy,  
That our griefs He may destroy:  
Till our grief is fled and gone  
He doth sit by us and moan.

## THE VOICE OF THE ANCIENT BARD.

YOUTH of delight! come hither  
And see the opening morn,  
Image of Truth new-born.  
Doubt is fled, and clouds of reason,  
Dark disputes and artful teasing.  
Folly is an endless maze;  
Tangled roots perplex her ways;  
How many have fallen there!  
They stumble all night over bones of the dead;  
And feel—they know not what save care;  
And wish to lead others, when they should be led.

## SONGS OF EXPERIENCE.

[ENGRAVED 1794.]

## INTRODUCTION.

HEAR the voice of the bard,  
Who Present, Past, and Future sees;  
Whose ears have heard  
The Holy Word  
That walked among the ancient trees,

Calling the lapsed soul,  
And weeping in the evening dew;  
That might control  
The starry pole,  
And fallen, fallen light renew!

O Earth, O Earth, return!  
Arise from out the dewy grass!  
Night is worn,  
And the morn  
Rises from the slumberous mass.

Turn away no more;  
Why wilt thou turn away?  
The starry floor,  
The watery shore,  
Is given thee till the break of day.

## EARTH'S ANSWER.

EARTH raised up her head  
From the darkness dread and drear,  
Her light fled,  
(Stony dread!)  
And her locks covered with grey despair.

'Prisoned on watery shore,  
Starry jealousy does keep my den  
Cold and hoar;  
Weeping o'er,  
I hear the father of the ancient men.

Selfish father of men!  
Cruel, jealous, selfish fear!  
Can delight,  
Chain'd in night,  
The virgins of youth and morning bear?

Does spring hide its joy,  
When buds and blossoms grow?  
Does the sower  
Sow by night?  
Or the ploughman in darkness plough?

Break this heavy chain,  
That does freeze my bones around!  
Selfish, vain,  
Eternal bane,  
That free love with bondage bound.'

## THE CLOD AND THE PEBBLE.

LOVE seeketh not itself to please,  
Nor for itself hath any care,  
But for another gives its ease,  
And builds a heaven in hell's despair.

So sang a little clod of clay,  
Trodden with the cattle's feet ;  
But a pebble of the brook  
Warbled out these metres meet :

' Love seeketh only *Self* to please,  
To bind another to its delight,  
Joys in another's loss of ease,  
And builds a hell in heaven's despite.'



## HOLY THURSDAY.

Is this a holy thing to see,  
In a rich and fruitful land,  
Babes reduced to misery,  
Fed with a cold usurious hand?

Is that trembling cry a song?  
Can it be a song of joy,  
And so many children poor?  
It is a land of poverty!

And their sun does never shine,  
And their fields are bleak and bare,  
And their ways are fill'd with thorns:  
It is eternal winter there.

For where'er the sun does shine,  
And where'er the rain does fall,  
Babes should never hunger there,  
Nor poverty the mind appal.

## THE LITTLE GIRL LOST.

IN futurity,  
I prophetic see,  
That the earth from sleep  
(Grave the sentence deep)

Shall arise, and seek  
For her Maker meek ;  
And the desert wild  
Become a garden mild.

In the southern clime,  
Where the summer's prime  
Never fades away,  
Lovely Lyca lay.

Seven summers old  
Lovely Lyca told.  
She had wandered long,  
Hearing wild birds' song.

' Sweet sleep, come to me  
Underneath this tree ;  
Do father, mother weep ?  
Where can Lyca sleep ?

' Lost in desert wild  
Is your little child.  
How can Lyca sleep  
If her mother weep ?

'If her heart does ache,  
Then let Lyca wake;  
If my mother sleep,  
Lyca shall not weep.

'Frowning, frowning night,  
O'er this desert bright  
Let thy moon arise,  
While I close my eyes.'

Sleeping Lyca lay  
While the beasts of prey,  
Come from caverns deep,  
View'd the maid asleep.

The kingly lion stood  
And the virgin view'd,  
Then he gambol'd round  
O'er the hallow'd ground;

Leopards, tigers, play  
Round her as she lay,  
While the lion old  
Bow'd his mane of gold,

And her breast did lick  
And upon her neck,  
From his eyes of flame,  
Ruby tears there came;

While the lioness  
Loos'd her slender dress,  
And naked they conveyed  
To caves the sleeping maid.

## THE LITTLE GIRL FOUND.

ALL the night in woe  
Lyca's parents go  
Over valleys deep,  
While the deserts weep.

Tired and woe-begone,  
Hoarse with making moan,  
Arm in arm, seven days  
They tread the desert ways.

Seven nights they sleep  
Among shadows deep,  
And dream they see their child  
Starved in desert wild.

Pale thro' pathless ways  
The fancied image strays  
Famish'd, weeping, weak,  
With hollow piteous shriek.

Rising from unrest,  
The trembling woman prest  
With feet of weary woe;  
She could no further go.

In his arms he bore  
Her, armed with sorrows sore;  
Till before their way  
A couching lion lay.

Turning back was vain,  
Soon his heavy mane  
Bore them to the ground ;  
Then he stalk'd around,

Smelling to his prey,  
But their fears allay  
When he licks their hands  
And silent by them stands.

They look upon his eyes  
Filled with deep surprise ;  
And wondering behold  
A spirit arm'd in gold.

On his head a crown,  
On his shoulders down  
Flow'd his golden hair.  
Gone was all their care.

'Follow me,' he said,  
'Weep not for the maid ;  
'In my palace deep,  
'Lyca lies asleep.'

Then they follow'd  
Where the vision led,  
And saw their sleeping child  
Among tigers wild.

To this day they dwell  
In a lonely dell,  
Nor fear the wolvis howl  
Nor the lion's growl.

## THE CHIMNEY SWEEPER.

A LITTLE black thing among the snow,  
Crying 'weep! weep!' in notes of woe!  
Where are thy father and mother? Say :—  
'They are both gone up to the church to pray,

'Because I was happy upon the heath,  
'And smil'd among the winter's snow,  
'They clothed me in the clothes of death,  
'And taught me to sing the notes of woe.

'And because I am happy and dance and sing,  
'They think they have done me no injury,  
'And are gone to praise God and His Priest and King,  
Who make up a heaven of our misery.'

## NURSE'S SONG.

WHEN the voices of children are heard on the green,  
And whisperings are in the dale,  
The days of my youth rise fresh in my mind,  
My face turns green and pale.

Then come home, my children, the sun is gone down,  
And the dews of night arise;  
Your spring and your day are wasted in play,  
And your winter and night in disguise.

## THE SICK ROSE.

O ROSE, thou art sick!  
The invisible worm  
That flies in the night,  
In the howling storm,

Has found out thy bed  
Of crimson joy,  
And his dark secret love  
Does thy life destroy.

## THE FLY.

LITTLE Fly,  
Thy summer's play  
My thoughtless hand  
Has brushed away.

Am not I  
A fly like thee?  
Or art not thou  
A man like me?

For I dance,  
And drink, and sing,  
Till some blind hand  
Shall brush my wing.

If thought is life,  
And strength, and breath;  
And the want  
Of thought is death;

Then am I  
A happy fly,  
If I live,  
Or if I die.



## THE ANGEL.

I DREAMT a dream ! What can it mean ?  
And that I was a maiden Queen,  
Guarded by an Angel mild :  
Witless woe was ne'er beguil'd !

And I wept both night and day,  
And he wip'd my tears away ;  
And I wept both day and night,  
And hid from him my heart's delight.

So he took his wings, and fled ;  
Then the morn blush'd rosy red.  
I dried my tears, and arm'd my fears  
With ten thousand shields and spears.

Soon my Angel came again,  
I was arm'd, he came in vain ;  
For the time of youth was fled,  
And grey hairs were on my head.

## THE TIGER.

TIGER, Tiger, burning bright  
In the forest of the night,  
What immortal hand or eye  
Framed thy fearful symmetry ?

In what distant deeps or skies  
Burned that fire within thine eyes ?  
On what wings dared he aspire ?  
What the hand dared seize the fire ?

And what shoulder, and what art,  
Could twist the sinews of thy heart ?  
When thy heart began to beat,  
What dread hand formed thy dread feet ?

What the hammer, what the chain,  
Knit thy strength and forged thy brain ?  
What the anvil ? What dread grasp  
Dared thy deadly terrors clasp ?

When the stars threw down their spears,  
And water'd heaven with their tears,  
Did He smile His work to see ?  
Did He who made the lamb make thee ?

## MY PRETTY ROSE TREE.

A FLOWER was offer'd to me,  
Such a flower as May never bore,  
But I said, I've a pretty rose tree,  
And I passed the sweet flower o'er.

Then I went to my pretty rose tree,  
To tend her by day and by night,  
But my rose turned away with jealousy  
And her thorns were my only delight.

## AH! SUNFLOWER.

AH! Sunflower! weary of time,  
Who countest the steps of the sun;  
Seeking after that sweet golden prime  
Where the traveller's journey is done;

Where the Youth pined away with desire,  
And the pale virgin shrouded in snow,  
Arise from their graves, and aspire  
Where my sunflower wishes to go.

## THE LILY.

THE modest Rose puts forth a thorn,  
The humble sheep a threat'ning horn:  
While the Lily white shall in Love delight,  
Nor a thorn, nor a threat, stain her beauty bright.

## THE GARDEN OF LOVE.

I LAID me down upon a bank,  
Where Love lay sleeping;  
I heard among the rushes dank  
Weeping, weeping.

Then I went to the heath and the wild,  
To the thistles and thorns of the waste;  
And they told me how they were beguil'd,  
Driven out, and compelled to be chaste.

I went to the Garden of Love,  
And saw what I never had seen;  
A Chapel was built in the midst,  
Where I used to play on the green.

And the gates of this Chapel were shut,  
And 'thou shalt not,' writ over the door;  
So I turned to the Garden of Love  
That so many sweet flowers bore.

And I saw it was filled with graves,  
And tombstones where flowers should be,  
And priests in black gowns were walking their rounds,  
And binding with briars my joys and desires.

## THE LITTLE VAGABOND.

DEAR mother, dear mother, the Church is cold,  
But the Alehouse is healthy, and pleasant, and warm ;  
Besides, I can tell where I am used well ;  
The poor parsons with wind like a blown bladder swell.

But if at the Church they would give us some Ale,  
And a pleasant fire our souls to regale,  
We'd sing and we'd pray all the livelong day,  
Nor ever once wish from the Church to stray.

Then the Parson might preach, and drink, and sing,  
And we'd be as happy as birds in the spring,  
And modest Dame Lurch, who is always at Church,  
Would not have bandy children, nor fasting, nor birch.

And God, like a father, rejoicing to see  
His children as pleasant and happy as He,  
Would have no more quarrel with the Devil or the Barrel,  
But kiss him, and give him both drink and apparel.

## LONDON.

I WANDER through each charter'd street,  
Near where the charter'd Thames does flow.  
And mark in every face I meet  
Marks of weakness, marks of woe.

In every cry of every man,  
In every infant's cry of fear,  
In every voice, in every ban,  
The mind-forg'd manacles I hear.

How the chimney-sweeper's cry  
Every blackening church appals,  
And the hapless soldier's sigh  
Runs in blood down palace walls.

But most, through midnight streets I hear  
How the youthful harlot's curse  
Blasts the new-born infant's tear,  
And blights with plagues the Marriage hearse.

## THE HUMAN ABSTRACT.

PITY would be no more  
If we did not make somebody poor,  
And Mercy no more could be  
If all were as happy as we.

And mutual fear brings Peace,  
Till the selfish loves increase ;  
Then Cruelty knits a snare,  
And spreads his baits with care.

He sits down with holy fears,  
And waters the ground with tears ;  
Then Humility takes its root  
Underneath his foot.

Soon spreads the dismal shade  
Of Mystery over his head,  
And the caterpillar and fly  
Feed on the Mystery.

And it bears the fruit of Deceit,  
Ruddy and sweet to eat,  
And the raven his nest has made  
In its thickest shade.

The gods of the earth and sea  
Sought through nature to find this tree,  
But their search was all in vain :  
There grows one in the human Brain.

## INFANT SORROW.

MY mother groaned, my father wept,  
Into the dangerous world I leapt,  
Helpless, naked, piping loud,  
Like a fiend hid in a cloud.

Struggling in my father's hands,  
Striving against my swaddling bands,  
Bound, and weary, I thought best  
To sulk upon my mother's breast.

## CHRISTIAN FORBEARANCE.

I WAS angry with my friend :  
I told my wrath, my wrath did end.  
I was angry with my foe :  
I told it not, my wrath did grow.}

And I watered it in fears  
Night and morning with my tears,  
And I sunned it with smiles  
And with soft deceitful wiles.

And it grew both day and night  
Till it bore an apple bright,  
And my foe beheld it shine,  
And he knew that it was mine,

And into my garden stole  
When the night had veil'd the pole ;  
In the morning, glad, I see  
My foe outstretch'd beneath the tree.



## A LITTLE BOY LOST.

' NOUGHT loves another as itself,  
' Nor venerates another so,  
' Nor is it possible to thought  
' A greater than itself to know.

' And, Father, how can I love you  
' Or any of my brothers more ?  
' I love you like the little bird  
' That picks up crumbs around the door.'

The Priest sat by and heard the child ;  
In trembling zeal he seiz'd his hair,  
He led him by his little coat,  
And all admired the priestly care.

And standing on the altar high,  
' Lo! what a fiend is here,' said he,  
' One who sets reason up for judge  
' Of our most holy Mystery.'

The weeping child could not be heard,  
The weeping parents wept in vain,  
They stripp'd him to his little shirt  
And bound him in an iron chain,

And burned him in a holy place  
Where many had been burned before ;  
The weeping parents wept in vain.  
Are such things done on Albion's shore ?

## A LITTLE GIRL LOST.

CHILDREN of the future Age,  
Reading this indignant page,  
Know that, in a former time,  
Love, sweet love, was thought a crime.

In the age of gold,  
Free from winter's cold,  
Youth and maiden bright,  
To the holy light,  
Naked in the sunny beams delight.

Once a youthful pair,  
Fill'd with softest care,  
Met in garden bright,  
Where the holy light  
Had just removed the curtains of the night.

Then, in rising day,  
On the grass they play;  
Parents were afar,  
Strangers came not near,  
And the maiden soon forgot her fear.

Tired with kisses sweet,  
They agree to meet  
When the silent sleep,  
Waves o'er heaven's deep  
And the weary tired wanderers weep.

To her father white  
Came the maiden bright,  
But his loving look,  
Like the holy book,  
All her tender limbs with terror shook.

Ona ! pale and weak,  
To thy father speak ?  
Oh ! the trembling fear,  
Oh ! the dismal care  
That shakes the blossoms of my hoary hair !

## A CRADLE SONG.

SLEEP, sleep, beauty bright,  
Dreaming in the joys of night ;  
Sleep, sleep ; in thy sleep  
Little sorrows sit and weep.

Sweet babe, in thy face  
Soft desires I can trace,  
Secret joys and secret smiles,  
Little pretty infant wiles.

As thy softest limbs I feel,  
Smiles as of the morning steal  
O'er thy cheek, and o'er thy breast  
Where thy little heart doth rest.

Oh the cunning wiles that creep  
In thy little heart asleep !  
When thy little heart doth wake,  
Then the dreadful light shall break.

## THE SCHOOLBOY.

I LOVE to rise on a summer morn,  
When birds are singing on every tree ;  
The distant huntsman winds his horn,  
And the skylark sings with me :  
O what sweet company !

But to go to school in a summer morn,—  
Oh ! it drives all joy away ;  
Under a cruel eye outworn,  
The little ones spend the day  
In sighing and dismay.

Ah ! then at times I drooping sit  
And spend many an anxious hour ;  
Nor in my book can I take delight,  
Nor sit in learning's bower,  
Worn through with the dreary shower.

How can the bird that is born for joy  
Sit in a cage and sing ?  
How can a child, when fears annoy,  
But droop his tender wing,  
And forget his youthful spring ?

O father and mother, if buds are nipp'd,  
And blossoms blown away ;  
And if the tender plants are stripp'd  
Of their joy in the springing day,  
By sorrow and care's dismay,—

How shall the summer arise in joy,  
Or the summer fruits appear?  
Or how shall we gather what griefs destroy,  
Or bless the mellowing year,  
When the blasts of winter appear?

## TO TIRZAH.

WHATE'ER is born of Mortal Birth  
Must be consumèd with the earth,  
To rise from generation free:  
Then what have I to do with thee?

The sexes sprang from shame and pride,  
Blown in the morn, in evening died;  
But mercy changed death into sleep;  
The sexes rose to work and weep.

Thou, mother of my mortal part,  
With cruelty didst mould my heart,  
And with false self-deceiving tears  
Didst bind my nostrils, eyes, and ears,

Didst close my tongue in senseless clay,  
And me to mortal life betray.  
The death of Jesus set me free:  
Then what have I to do with thee?



✓ The Author & Printer W Blake.







## The Ecchoing Green



The Sun does arise,  
And make happy the skies:  
The merry bells ring,  
To welcome the Spring.  
The sky lark and the owl,  
The birds of the bush,  
Sing louder around,  
In the bells' cheerful sound,  
While our sports shall be seen,  
On the Ecchoing Green.



Old John with white hair  
Does laugh away care,  
Sitting under the oak,  
Among the old folk,





# The Lamb

Little Lamb who made thee  
Dost thou know who made thee  
Gave thee life & bid thee feed;  
By the stream & over the mead;  
Gave thee clothing of delight,  
Softest clothing woolly bright;  
Gave thee such a tender voice,  
Making all the vales rejoice;  
Little Lamb who made thee  
Dost thou know who made thee

Little Lamb I'll tell thee,  
Little Lamb I'll tell thee;  
He is called by thy name,  
For he calls himself a Lamb;  
He is meek & he is mild,  
He became a little child;  
A child & thou a lamb,  
We are called by his name.  
Little Lamb God bless thee,  
Little Lamb God bless thee.





# A CRADLE SONG

Sweet dreams form a shade  
O'er my lovely infants head :  
Sweet dreams of pleasant streams,  
Thy happy silent moony beams

Sweet sleep with soft down,  
Weave thy brows an infant crown.  
Sweet sleep Angel mild,  
Hover o'er my happy child.

Sweet smiles in the night,  
Hover over my delight.  
Sweet smiles Mothers smiles  
All the livelong night beguiles.

Sweet moans, dovelike sighs,  
Chase not slumber from thy eyes.  
Sweet moans, sweeter smiles,  
All the dovelike moans beguiles.

Sleep sleep happy child.  
All creation slept and smild.  
Sleep sleep, happy sleep,  
While o'er thee thy mother weep.

Sweet babe in thy face.  
Holy image I can trace.  
Sweet babe once like thee.  
Thy maker lay and wept for me.

Wept





## The Divine Image.

To Mercy Pity Peace and Love.  
All pray in their distress:  
And to these virtues of delight  
Return their thankfulness.

For Mercy Pity Peace and Love,  
Is God our Father dear:  
And Mercy Pity Peace and Love  
Is Man his child and care

For Mercy has a human heart  
Pity, a human face;  
And Love the human form divine  
And Peace, the human dress.

Then every man of every clime,  
That prays in his distress,  
Prays to the human form divine  
Love Mercy Pity Peace.

And all must love the human form,  
In heathen Turk or Jew:  
Where Mercy, Love & Pity dwell  
There God is dwelling too.







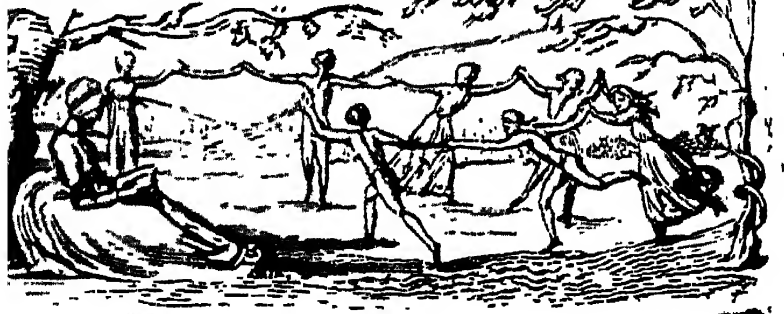


When the voices of children are heard on the green  
And laughing is heard on the hill  
My heart is at rest within my breast  
And every thing else is still

Then come home my children, the sun is gone down  
And the dew of night arise  
Come come leave off play, and let us away  
Till the morning appears in the skies

No no let us play, for it is yet day  
And we cannot go to sleep  
Besides in the sky the little birds fly  
And the hills are all coverd with sheep

Well well go & play till the light fades away  
And then go home to bed  
The little ones leaped & shouted & laugh'd  
And all the hills ecchoed





# On Anothers Sorrow

Can I see anothers woe,  
And not be in sorrow too  
Can I see anothers grief,  
And not seek for kind relief.

Can I see a falling tear  
And not feel in sorrows share,  
Can a father see his child  
Weep, nor be with sorrow filld.

Can a mother sit and hear,  
An infant groan an infant fear—  
No no never canst be,  
Never never can it be.

And can he who smiles on all,  
Hear the wren with sorrows small,  
Hear the small birds grief & care  
Hear the woes that infants bear—

And not sit beside the nest  
Pouring pity in their breast  
And not sit the cradle near  
Weeping tear on infants tear.

And not sit both night & day,  
Wiping all our tears away,  
O' no never can it be,  
Never never can it be.

He doth give his joy to all,  
He becomes an infant small,  
He becomes a man of woe  
He doth feel the sorrow too.

Think not thou canst sigh a sigh,  
And thy maker is not by  
Think not thou canst weep a tear,  
And thy maker is not near.

O' he gives to us his joy  
That our grief he may destroy  
Till our grief is fled & gone  
He doth sit by us and moan.









## HOLY THURSDAY

Is this a holy thing to see.  
In a rich and fruitful land,  
Babes reduced to misery,  
Fed with cold and usurous hand?

Is that trembling cry a song?  
Can it be a song of joy?  
And so many children poor?  
It is a land of poverty.

And their sun does never shine.  
And their fields are bleak & bare.  
And their ways are fill'd with thorns.  
It is eternal winter there.

For where-e'er the sun does shine,  
And where-e'er the rain does fall;  
Babe can never hunger there.  
Nor poverty the mind appall.





# The Little Girl Lost.

In fury  
I prophetic see,  
That the earth from sleep,  
Grazed the sentence deep,  
Shall arise and seek  
For her maker's work;  
And the desert wild  
Become a garden mild.

In the southern clime,  
O'er the summer's prime,  
Never fades away;  
Lovely Lyca lay.

Seven summers old  
Lovely Lyca told;  
She had wandered long,  
Hearing wild birds song.

Sweet sleep come to me  
Underneath this tree;  
Do father mother weep,  
Where can Lyca sleep.

Lost in desert wild  
Is your little child,  
How can Lyca sleep,  
If her mother weep.

If her heart does ache,  
Then let Lyca wake;  
If my mother sleep,  
Lyca shall not weep.

Flowing, flowing night  
O'er this desert bright,  
Let thy moon arise,  
While I close my eyes.

Sleeping Lyca lay,  
While the beasts of prey,  
Come from caverns deep,  
Viewed the maid asleep.

The king's lion stood  
And the virgin viewed,  
Then he gambled round  
O'er the hallowed ground.





Lamenting weeping weak  
With hollow piteous shriek  
Hearing from unrest,  
The trembling woman prest,  
With feet of weary woe;  
She could no further go.

In his arms he bore,  
Her arm'd with sorrow sore  
Till before their way,  
A crouching lion lay.

Turning back was vain,  
Soon his heavy mane  
Bore them to the ground,  
Then he stalked around.

Smelling to his prey,  
But their tears allay,  
When he looks their hands;  
And silent by them stands.

They look upon his eyes  
Fill'd with deep surprise;  
And wondering behold,  
A spirit arm'd in gold.

On his head a crown,  
On his shoulders down,  
Dow'd his golden hair,  
Gone was all their care.

Follow me he said,  
Weep not for the maid;  
In my palace deep,  
Lycia lies asleep.

Then they followed,  
Where the vision led;  
And saw their sleeping child,  
Among pygmies wild.

To this day they dwell  
In a lonely dell,  
Nor from the wolfish howl,  
Nor the lions growl.





## My Pretty ROSE TREE

A flower was afford to me.  
 Such a flower as May never bore.  
 But I said I've a Pretty Rose-tree.  
 And I palsed the sweet flower o'er.  
 Then I went to my Pretty Rose-tree.  
 To tend her by day and by night.  
 But my Rose turrid away with jealousy:  
 And her thorns were my only delight.



## AH! SUN FLOWER

Ah Sun-flower! weary of time,  
 Who countest the steps of the Sun:  
 Seeking after that sweet golden clime  
 Where the travellers' journey is done.

Where the Youth pined away with desire,  
 And the pale Virgin shrouded in snow:  
 Arise from their graves and aspire  
 Where my Sun-flower wishes to go.

## THE LILLY

The modest Rose puts forth a thorn:  
 The humble Sheep, a threatening horn:  
 While the Lilly white, shall in Love delight,  
 Nor a thorn nor a threat stain her beauty bright.





## LONDON

I wander thro' each charter'd street,  
Near where the charter'd Thames does flow,  
And mark in every face I meet  
Marks of weakness, marks of woe.

In every cry of every Man,  
In every Infants cry of fear,  
In every voice, in every ban,  
The mind-forg'd manacles I hear

How the Chimney sweepers cry  
Every blackning Church appalls,  
And the hapless Soldiers sigh  
Runs in blood down Palace walls

But most thro' midnight streets I hear  
How the youthful Harlots curse  
Blasts the new-born Infants tear  
And blights with plagues the Marriage hearse





## The Human Abstract.

Noty would be no more,  
If we did not make somebody Poor;  
And Mercy no more could be,  
If all were as happy as we;  
And mutual fear brings peace;  
Till the selfish loves increase.  
Then Cruelty knits a snare,  
And spreads his baits with care.  
He sits down with holy fears,  
And waters the ground with tears;  
Then Humility takes its root  
Underneath his foot.

Soon spreads the dismal shade  
Of Mystery over his head  
And the Cutteworm and Fly,  
Feed on the Mystery.

And it bears the fruit of Deceit,  
Ruddy and sweet to eat;  
And the Raven his nest has made  
In its thickest shade.

The Gods of the earth and sea,  
Sought thro Nature to find this Tree  
But their search was all in vain.  
There grows one in the Human Brain.





# INFANT SORROW

My mother groand, my father wept.  
To the dangerous world I leapt.  
Helpless, naked, piping loud:  
Like a fawn hid in a wood

Struggling in my father's hands,  
Striving against my swadling bands,  
Tired and weary I thought best  
To sulk upon my mother's breast.





# The School Boy

I love to rise in a summer morn,  
When the birds sing on every tree;  
The distant huntsman winds his horn,  
And the sky-lark sings with me.  
O! what sweet company

But to go to school in a summer morn  
O! it drives all joy away,  
Under a cruel eye outworn.  
The little ones spend the day,  
In sighing and dismay.

Ah! then at times I drooping sit,  
And spend many an anxious hour  
Nor in my book can I take delight,  
Nor sit in learning's bower.  
Worn thro' with the dreary shower

How can the bird that is born for joy,  
Sit in a cage and sing,  
How can a child when fears annoy,  
But droop his tender wing,  
And forget his youthful spring.

O! father & mother, if buds are nipt,  
And blossoms blown away,  
And if the tender plants are strip'd  
Of their joy in the springing day,  
By sorrow and cares dismay.

How shall the summer arise in joy  
Or the summer fruits appear,  
Or how shall we gather what griefs destroy,  
Or bless the mellowing year,  
When the blasts of winter appear.





# THE BOOK OF THEL.

[ENGRAVED 1789.]

[The *The!* has been spoken of in the *Life* (Chapter X. pages 76-8). It is equal in delightfulness to Blake's lyrical poetry ; and being the most tender and simple of the class of his works to which it belongs, may prove the most generally acceptable as a specimen of these.]

*Does the Eagle know what is in the pit ?  
Or wilt thou go and ask the mole ?  
Can Wisdom be put in a silver rod ?  
Or Love in a golden bowl ?*



THE daughters of the Seraphim led round their sunny flocks,  
All but the youngest : she in paleness sought the secret air



To fade away like morning beauty from her mortal day.  
Down by the river of Adona her soft voice is heard,  
And thus her gentle lamentation falls like morning dew.  
"O life of this our Spring! why fades the lotus of the  
water?"

Why fade these children of the Spring, born but to smile  
and fall?

Ah! Thel is like a watery bow, and like a parting cloud,  
Like a reflection in a glass, like shadows in the water,  
Like dreams of infants, like a smile upon an infant's face,  
Like the dove's voice, like transient day, like music in the  
air.

Ah! gentle may I lay me down, and gentle rest my  
head,

And gentle sleep the sleep of death, and gentle hear the  
voice

Of him that walketh in the garden in the evening time."

The Lily of the valley breathing in the humble grass  
Answer'd the lovely maid and said: "I am a watery weed,  
And I am very small, and love to dwell in lowly vales;  
So weak, the gilded butterfly scarce perches on my head.  
Yet I am visited from heaven; and He that smiles on all  
Walks in the valley, and each morn over me spreads His  
hand,

Saying, 'Rejoice, thou humble grass, thou new-born lily-  
flower,

Thou gentle maid of silent valleys and of modest brooks;  
For thou shalt be clothed in light and fed with morning  
manna,

Till summer's heat melts thee beside the fountains and the  
springs

To flourish in eternal vales.' Then why should Thel  
complain?

Why should the mistress of the vales of Har utter a  
sigh?"

She ceased and smiled in tears, then sat down in her silver shrine.

Thel answer'd : " O thou little virgin of the peaceful valley,  
Giving to those that cannot crave, the voiceless, the  
o'ertired ;

Thy breath doth nourish the innocent lamb, he smells thy  
milky garments,

He crops thy flowers, whilst thou sittest smiling in his face,  
Wiping his mild and meekin mouth from all contagious  
taints.

Thy wine doth purify the golden honey, thy perfume,  
Which thou dost scatter on every little blade of grass that  
springs,

Revives the milked cow, and tames the fire-breathing steed.

But Thel is like a faint cloud kindled at the rising sun :

I vanish from my pearly throne, and who shall find my  
place? "

" Queen of the vales," the Lily answered, " ask the tender  
cloud,

And it shall tell thee why it glitters in the morning sky,  
And why it scatters its bright beauty through the humid  
air.

Descend, O little cloud, and hover before the eyes of  
Thel."

The cloud descended, and the Lily bowed her modest head  
And went to mind her numerous charge among the verdant  
grass.

## II.

" O little cloud," the Virgin said, " I charge thee tell to me  
Why thou complainest not, when in one hour thou fad'st  
away :

Then we shall seek thee, but not find. Ah ! Thel is like  
to thee ;

I pass away, yet I complain and no one hears my voice."

The cloud then showed his golden head, and his bright  
form emerged

Hovering and glittering on the air before the face of Thel.

"O virgin, know'st thou not our steeds drink of the golden  
springs

Where Luvah doth renew his horses? Look'st thou on  
my youth,

And fearest thou because I vanish and am seen no more?

Nothing remains. O maid, I tell thee, when I pass away

It is to tenfold life, to love, to peace, and raptures holy.

Unseen descending weigh my light wings upon balmy  
flowers,

And court the fair-eye'd dew to take me to her shining  
tent :

The weeping virgin trembling kneels before the risen sun,

Till we arise, link'd in a golden band, and never part,

But walk united, bearing food to all our tender flowers."

"Dost thou, O little cloud? I fear that I am not like  
thee ;

For I walk through the vales of Har, and smell the  
sweetest flowers ;

But I feed not the little flowers : I hear the warbling birds,

But I feed not the warbling birds, they fly and seek their  
food :

But Thel delights in these no more because I fade away,

And all shall say, without a use this shining woman liv'd,

Or did she only live to be at death the food of worms?"

The Cloud reclin'd upon his airy throne and answer'd  
thus :

"Then if thou art the food of worms, O virgin of the skies,  
How great thy use, how great thy blessing. Every thing  
that lives,

Lives not alone nor for itself. Fear not and I will call

The weak worm from its lowly bed, and thou shalt hear  
its voice.

Come forth, worm of the silent valley, to thy pensive  
queen."

The helpless worm arose, and sat upon the Lily's leaf,  
And the bright cloud sailed on to find his partner in the  
vale.

## III.

Then Thel, astonished, viewed the worm upon its dewy bed.

"Art thou a worm? image of weakness, art thou but a  
worm?

I see thee, like an infant, wrapped in the Lily's leaf:

Ah! weep not, little voice, thou canst not speak, but thou  
canst weep.

Is this a worm? I see thee lie helpless and naked, weeping,  
And none to answer, none to cherish thee with mother's  
smiles."

The clod of clay heard the worm's voice, and rais'd her  
pitying head:

She bow'd over the weeping infant, and her life exhal'd  
In milky fondness: then on Thel she fixed her humble eyes.

"O beauty of the vales of Har! we live not for ourselves.  
Thou seest me, the meanest thing, and so I am indeed;  
My bosom of itself is cold and of itself is dark,  
But He that loves the lowly pours His oil upon my head,  
And kisses me, and binds His nuptial bands around my  
breast,

And says:—"Thou mother of my children, I have loved  
thee,

And I have given thee a crown that none can take away."

But how this is, sweet maid, I know not, and I cannot  
know ;  
I ponder, and I cannot ponder : yet I live and love !”

The daughter of beauty wip'd her pitying tears with her  
white veil,  
And said :—“ Alas ! I knew not this, and therefore did I  
weep.

That God would love a worm, I knew, and punish the evil  
foot

That wilful bruised its helpless form ; but that He cherish'd it  
With milk and oil, I never knew, and therefore did I weep.  
And I complained in the mild air, because I fade away,  
And lay me down in thy cold bed, and leave my shining lot.”

“ Queen of the vales,” the matron clay answered ; “ I heard  
thy sighs,  
And all thy moans flew o'er my roof, but I have call'd them  
down.

Wilt thou, O queen, enter my house ? 'tis given thee to enter,  
And to return : fear nothing, enter with thy virgin feet.”

#### IV.

The eternal gates' terrific porter lifted the northern bar ;  
Thel enter'd in and saw the secrets of the land unknown.  
She saw the couches of the dead, and where the fibrous root  
Of every heart on earth infixes deep its restless twists :  
A land of sorrows and of tears, where never smile was seen.

She wander'd in the land of clouds, through valleys dark,  
listening

Dolours and lamentations ; wailing oft beside a dewy grave  
She stood in silence, listening to the voices of the ground,  
Till to her own grave-plot she came, and there she sat down,  
And heard this voice of sorrow breathed from the hollow pit :

“Why cannot the ear be closed to its own destruction?  
Or the glistening eye to the poison of a smile?  
Why are eyelids stor’d with arrows ready drawn,  
Where a thousand fighting-men in ambush lie,  
Or an eye of gifts and graces showering fruits and coined  
gold?

“Why a tongue impress’d with honey from every wind?  
Why an ear, a whirlpool fierce to draw creations in?  
Why a nostril wide inhaling terror, trembling and affright?  
Why a tender curb upon the youthful burning boy?  
Why a little curtain of flesh on the bed of our desire?”

The virgin started from her seat, and with a shriek  
Fled back unhinder’d till she came into the vales of Har.



## IDEAS OF GOOD AND EVIL.

IN the MS. Note-book, to which frequent reference has been made in the *Life*, a page stands inscribed with the heading given above. It seems uncertain how much of the book's contents such title may have been meant to include ; but it is now adopted here as a not inappropriate summarizing endorsement for the precious section which here follows. In doing so, Mr. Swinburne's example (in his *Essay on Blake*) has been followed, as regards pieces drawn from the Note-book.

The contents of the present section are derived partly from the Note-book in question, and partly from another small autograph collection of different matter, somewhat more fairly copied. The poems have been reclaimed, as regards the first-mentioned source, from as chaotic a mass as could well be imagined ; amid which it has sometimes been necessary either to omit, transpose, or combine, so as to render available what was very seldom found in a final state. And even in the pieces drawn from the second source specified above, means of the same kind have occasionally been resorted to, where they seemed to lessen obscurity or avoid redundancy. But with all this, there is nothing throughout that is not faithfully Blake's own.

One piece in this series (*The Two Songs*) may be regarded as a different version of the *Human Abstract*, occurring in the *Songs of Experience*. This new form is certainly the finer one, I think, by reason of its personified character, which adds greatly to the force of the impression produced. It is, indeed, one of the finest things Blake ever did, really belonging, by its vivid completeness, to the order of perfect short poems,—never a very large band, even when the best poets are ransacked to recruit it. Others among the longer poems of this section, which are, each in its own way, truly admirable, are *Broken Love*, *Mary*, and *Auguries of Innocence*.



It is but too probable that the piece called *Broken Love* has a recondite bearing on the bewilderments of Blake's special mythology. But besides a soul suffering in such limbo, this poem has a recognisable body penetrated with human passion. From this point of view, never, perhaps, have the agony and perversity of sundered affection been more powerfully (however singularly) expressed than here.

The speaker is one whose soul has been intensified by pain to be his only world, among the scenes, figures, and events of which he moves as in a new state of being. The emotions have been quickened and isolated by conflicting torment, till each is a separate companion. There is his 'spectre,' the jealous pride which scents in the snow the footsteps of the beloved rejected woman, but is a wild beast to guard his way from reaching her; his 'emanation' which silently weeps within him, for has not he also sinned? So they wander together in 'a fathomless and boundless deep,' the morn full of tempests and the night of tears. Let her weep, he says, not for his sins only, but for her own; nay, he will cast his sins upon her shoulders too; they shall be more and more till she come to him again. Also this woe of his can array itself in stately imagery. He can count separately how many of his soul's affections the knife she stabbed it with has slain, how many yet mourn over the tombs which he has built for these: he can tell, too, of some that still watch around his bed, bright sometimes with ecstatic passion of melancholy and crowning his mournful head with vine. All these living forgive her transgressions: when will she look upon them, that the dead may live again? Has she not pity to give for pardon? nay, does he not need her pardon too? He cannot seek her, but oh! if she would return! Surely her place is ready for her, and bread and wine of forgiveness of sins.

The *Crystal Cabinet* and the *Mental Traveller* belong to a truly mystical order of poetry. The former is a lovely piece of lyrical writing, but certainly has not the clearness of crystal. Yet the meaning of such among Blake's compositions, as this is, may sometimes be missed chiefly through seeking for a sense more recondite than was really meant. A rather intricate interpretation was attempted here in the first edition of these Selections. Mr. W. M. Rossetti has probably since found the true one in his simple sentence: "This poem seems to me to represent, under a very ideal form, the phenomena of gestation and birth" (see the Aldine edition of *Blake's Poems*, page 174). The singular stanza commencing "Another England there I saw," &c., may thus be taken to indicate quaintly that the undeveloped

creature, half sentient and half conscious, has a world of its own akin in somewise to the country of its birth.

The *Mental Traveller* seemed at first a hopeless riddle; and the editor of these Selections must confess to having been on the point of omitting it, in spite of its high poetic beauty, as incomprehensible. He is again indebted to his brother for the clear-sighted, and no doubt correct, exposition which is now printed with it, and brings its full value to light.

The poem of *Mary* appears to be, on one side, an allegory of the poetic or spiritual mind moving unrecognised and reviled among its fellows; and this view of it is corroborated when we find Blake applying to himself two lines almost identically taken from it, in the last of the Letters to Mr. Butts printed in the *Life*. But the literal meaning may be accepted, too, as a hardly extreme expression of the rancour and envy so constantly attending pre-eminent beauty in women.

A most noble, though surpassingly quaint example of Blake's loving sympathy with all forms of created life, as well as of the kind of oracular power which he possessed of giving vigorous expression to abstract or social truths, will be found in the *Auguries of Innocence*. It is a somewhat tangled skein of thought, but stored throughout with the riches of simple wisdom.

Quaintness reaches its climax in *William Bond*, which may be regarded as a kind of glorified street-ballad. One point that requires to be noted is that the term 'fairies' is evidently used to indicate passionate emotions, while 'angels' are spirits of cold coercion. The close of the ballad is very beautiful. It is not long since there seemed to dawn on the present writer a meaning in this ballad not discovered before. Should we not connect it with the line *In a Myrtle Shade* (page 118), the meaning of which is obvious to all knowers of Blake as bearing on marriage? And may not 'William Bond' thus be William Blake, the bondman of the 'lovely myrtle tree'? It is known that the shadow of jealousy, far from unfounded, fell on poor Catherine Blake's married life at one moment, and it has been stated that this jealousy culminated in a terrible and difficult crisis. We ourselves can well imagine that this ballad is but a literal relation, with such emotional actors, of some transfiguring trance and passion of mutual tears from which Blake arose no longer 'bond' to his myrtle-tree, but with that love, purged of all drossier element, whose last death-bed accent was, "Kate, you have ever been an angel to me!"

The ballad of *William Bond* has great spiritual beauties, whatever its meaning ; and it is one of only two examples, in this form, occurring among Blake's lyrics. The other is called *Long John Brown and Little Mary Bell*, and perhaps the reader may be sufficiently surprised without it.

The shorter poems, and even the fragments, afford many instances of that exquisite metrical gift and rightness in point of form which constitute Blake's special glory among his contemporaries, even more eminently perhaps than the grander command of mental resources which is also his. Such qualities of pure perfection in *writing verse*, as he perpetually, without effort, displayed, are to be met with among those elder poets whom he loved, and such again are now looked upon as the peculiar trophies of a school which has arisen since his time ; but he alone (let it be repeated and remembered) possessed them *then*, and possessed them in clear completeness. Colour and metre, these are the true patents of nobility in painting and poetry, taking precedence of all intellectual claims ; and it is by virtue of these, first of all, that Blake holds, in both arts, a rank which cannot be taken from him.

Of the *Epigrams on Art*, which conclude this section, a few are really pointed, others amusingly irascible,—all more or less a sort of nonsense verses, and not even pretending to be much else. To enter into their reckless spirit of doggrel, it is almost necessary to see the original note-book in which they occur, which continually testifies, by sudden exclamatory entries, to the curious degree of boyish impulse which was one of Blake's characteristics. It is not improbable that such names as Rembrandt, Reubens, Correggio, Reynolds, may have met the reader's eye before in a very different sort of context from that which surrounds them in the surprising poetry of this their brother artist ; and certainly they are made to do service here as scarecrows to the crops of a rather jealous husbandman. And for all that, I have my strong suspicions that the same amount of disparagement of them uttered *to* instead of *by* our good Blake, would have elicited, on his side, a somewhat different estimate. These phials of his wrath, however, have no poison but merely some laughing gas in them ; so now that we are setting the laboratory a little in order, let these, too, come down from their dusty upper shelf.

## THE BIRDS.

*He.* WHERE thou dwellest, in what grove,  
Tell me, fair one, tell me, love,  
Where thou thy charming nest dost build,  
O thou pride of every field !

*She.* Yonder stands a lonely tree,  
There I live and mourn for thee ;  
Morning drinks my silent tear,  
And evening winds my sorrow bear.

*He.* O thou summer's harmony,  
I have lived and mourned for thee ;  
Each day I mourn along the wood,  
And night hath heard my sorrows loud.

*She.* Dost thou truly long for me ?  
And am I thus sweet to thee ?  
Sorrow now is at an end,  
O my lover and my friend !

*He.* Come ! on wings of joy we'll fly  
To where my bower is hung on high ;  
Come, and make thy calm retreat  
Among green leaves and blossoms sweet.

## BROKEN LOVE.

My Spectre around me night and day  
Like a wild beast guards my way ;  
My Emanation far within  
Weeps incessantly for my sin.

A fathomless and boundless deep,  
There we wander, there we weep ;  
On the hungry craving wind  
My Spectre follows thee behind.

He scents thy footsteps in the snow,  
Wheresoever thou dost go ;  
Through the wintry hail and rain  
When wilt thou return again ?

Poor pale, pitiable form  
That I follow in a storm,  
From sin I never shall be free  
Till thou forgive and come to me.

A deep winter dark and cold  
Within my heart thou dost unfold ;  
Iron tears and groans of lead  
Thou binds't around my aching head.

Dost thou not in pride and scorn  
Fill with tempests all my morn,  
And with jealousies and fears?—  
And fill my pleasant nights with tears?

O'er my sins thou dost sit and moan :  
Hast thou no sins of thine own ?  
O'er my sins thou dost sit and weep  
And lull thine own sins fast asleep.

Thy weeping thou shalt ne'er give o'er ;  
I sin against thee more and more,  
And never will from sin be free  
Till thou forgive and come to me.

What transgressions I commit  
Are for thy transgressions fit,—  
They thy harlots, thou their slave ;  
And my bed becomes their grave.

Seven of my sweet loves thy' knife  
Hath bereaved of their life :  
Their marble tombs I built, with tears  
And with cold and shadowy fears.

Seven more loves weep night and day  
Round the tombs where my loves lay,  
And seven more loves attend at night  
Around my couch with torches bright.

And seven more loves in my bed  
Crown with vine my mournful head ;  
Pitying and forgiving all  
Thy transgressions, great and small.

When wilt thou return, and view  
My loves, and them in life renew?  
When wilt thou return and live?  
When wilt thou pity as I forgive?

Throughout all Eternity  
I forgive you, you forgive me.  
As our dear Redeemer said:  
'This the wine, and this the bread.'

## THE TWO SONGS.

I HEARD an Angel singing  
When the day was springing :  
' Mercy, Pity, and Peace  
Are the world's release.'

So he sang all day  
Over the new-mown hay,  
Till the sun went down,  
And haycocks looked brown.

I heard a Devil curse  
Over the heath and the furze :  
' Mercy could be no more  
If there were nobody poor,  
And Pity no more could be  
If all were happy as ye :  
And mutual fear brings Peace.  
Misery's increase  
Are Mercy, Pity, Peace.'

At his curse the sun went down,  
And the heavens gave a frown.



## THE DEFILED SANCTUARY.

I SAW a chapel all of gold  
That none did dare to enter in,  
And many weeping stood without,  
Weeping, mourning, worshipping.

I saw a serpent rise between  
The white pillars of the door,  
And he forced and forced and forced  
Till he the golden hinges tore :

And along the pavement sweet,  
Set with pearls and rubies bright,  
All his shining length he drew,  
Till upon the altar white .

He vomited his poison out  
On the bread and on the wine.  
So I turned into a sty,  
And laid me down among the swine.'

## CUPID.

WHY was Cupid a boy,  
And why a boy was he?  
He should have been a girl,  
For aught that I can see.

For he shoots with his bow,  
And the girl shoots with her eye,  
And they both are merry and glad,  
And laugh when we do cry.

Then to make Cupid a boy  
Was surely a woman's plan,  
For a boy never learns so much  
Till he has become a man:

And then he's so pierced with cares  
And wounded with arrowy smarts,  
That the whole business of his life  
Is to pick out the heads of the darts.

## THE WOMAN TAKEN IN ADULTERY.

(*Extracted from a Fragmentary Poem, entitled 'The Everlasting Gospel.'*)

THE vision of Christ that thou dost see  
Is my vision's greatest enemy.  
Thine is the fare of all mankind,—  
Mine speaks in parables to the blind ;  
Thine loves the same world that mine hates ;  
Thy Heaven-doors are my Hell-gates.  
Socrates taught what Meletus  
Loathed as a nation's bitterest curse,  
And Caiaphas was in his own mind  
A benefactor to mankind.  
Both read the Bible day and night ;  
But thou read'st black where I read white.

\* \* \* \* \*

Jesus sat in Moses' chair ;  
They brought the trembling woman there ;  
Moses commands she be stoned to death ;  
What was the sound of Jesus' breath ?  
He laid His hand on Moses' law :  
The ancient heavens in silent awe,  
Writ with curses from pole to pole,  
All away began to roll.  
The earth trembling and naked lay,  
In secret bed of mortal clay,  
And she heard the breath of God  
As she heard it by Eden's flood :—

‘To be good only, is to be  
‘A God, or else a Pharisee.  
‘Thou Angel of the Presence Divine,  
‘That didst create this body of mine,  
‘Wherefore hast thou writ these laws  
‘And created Hell’s dark jaws?  
‘Though thou didst all to chaos roll  
‘With the serpent for its soul,  
‘Still the breath Divine doth move,  
‘And the breath Divine is Love.  
‘Woman, fear not; let me see  
‘The seven devils that trouble thee;  
‘Hide not from my sight thy sin,  
‘That full forgiveness thou may’st win.  
‘Hath no man condemnèd thee?’

‘No man, Lord.’

‘Then what is he  
‘Who shall accuse thee? Come ye forth,  
‘Ye fallen fiends of heavenly birth!  
‘Ye shall bow before her feet,  
‘Ye shall lick the dust for meat;  
‘And though ye cannot love, but hate,  
‘Ye shall be beggars at love’s gate.  
‘What was thy love? Let me see’t!  
‘Was it love, or dark deceit?’  
‘Love too long from me hath fled;  
‘’Twas dark deceit, to earn my bread;  
‘’Twas covet, or ’twas custom, or  
‘Some trifle not worth caring for.  
‘But these would call a shame and sin  
‘Love’s temple that God dwelleth in.’

## LOVE'S SECRET.

NEVER seek to tell thy love,  
Love that never told can be !  
For the gentle wind doth move  
Silently, invisibly.

I told my love, I told my love,  
I told her all my heart,  
Trembling, cold, in ghastly fears.  
Ah ! she did depart.

Soon after she was gone from me  
A traveller came by,  
Silently, invisibly :  
He took her with a sigh.

## THE WILD FLOWER'S SONG.

As I wandered in the forest  
The green leaves among,  
I heard a wild-flower  
Singing a song.

'I slept in the earth  
'In the silent night,  
'I murmured my fears  
'And I felt delight.

'In the morning I went,  
'As rosy as morn,  
'To seek for new joy,  
'But I met with scorn.'

## THE CRYSTAL CABINET.

THE maiden caught me in the wild,  
Where I was dancing merrily ;  
She put me into her cabinet,  
And locked me up with a golden key.

This cabinet is formed of gold,  
And pearl and crystal shining bright,  
And within it opens into a world  
And a little, lovely, moony night.

Another England there I saw,  
Another London with its Tower,  
Another Thames and other hills,  
And another pleasant Surrey bower.

Another maiden like herself,  
Translucent, lovely, shining clear,  
Threefold, each in the other closed ;  
O what a pleasant trembling fear !

O what a smile ! a threefold smile  
Filled me that like a flame I burned ;  
I bent to kiss the lovely maid,  
And found a threefold kiss returned.

I strove to seize the inmost form  
With ardour fierce and hands of flame,  
But burst the crystal cabinet,  
And like a weeping babe became.

A weeping babe upon the wild,  
And weeping woman pale reclined,  
And in the outward air again  
I filled with woes the passing wind.



## SMILE AND FROWN.

THERE is a smile of Love,  
And there is a smile of Deceit,  
And there is a smile of smiles  
In which the two smiles meet.

And there is a frown of Hate,  
And there is a frown of Disdain,  
And there is a frown of frowns  
Which you strive to forget in vain.

For it sticks in the heart's deep core,  
And it sticks in the deep backbone.  
And no smile ever was smiled  
But only one smile alone

(And betwixt the cradle and grave  
It only once smiled can be),  
That when it once is smiled  
There's an end to all misery.

## THE GOLDEN NET.

BENEATH a white-thorn's lovely May,  
Three virgins at the break of day:—  
'Whither, young man, whither away?  
Alas for woe! alas for woe!' .  
They cry, and tears for ever flow.  
The first was clothed in flames of fire,  
The second clothed in iron wire;  
The third was clothed in tears and sighs,  
Dazzling bright before my eyes.  
They bore a net of golden twine  
To hang upon the branches fine.  
Pitying I wept to see the woe  
That love and beauty undergo—  
To be clothed in burning fires  
And in ungratified desires,  
And in tears clothed night and day;  
It melted all my soul away.  
When they saw my tears, a smile  
That might heaven itself beguile  
Bore the golden net aloft,  
As on downy pinions soft,  
Over the morning of my day.  
Underneath the net I stray,  
Now intreating Flaming-fire,  
Now intreating Iron-wire,  
Now intreating Tears-and-sighs.—  
O when will the morning rise!

## THE LAND OF DREAMS.

' AWAKE, awake, my little boy!  
Thou wast thy mother's only joy;  
Why dost thou weep in thy gentle sleep?  
O wake! thy father doth thee keep.

' O what land is the land of dreams?  
What are its mountains and what are its streams?  
' O father! I saw my mother there,  
Among the lilies by waters fair.

' Among the lambs clothèd in white,  
She walked with her Thomas in sweet delight.  
I wept for joy, like a dove I mourn—  
O when shall I again return!'

' Dear child! I also by pleasant streams  
Have wandered all night in the land of dreams,  
But, though calm and warm the waters wide  
I could not get to the other side.'

' Father, O father! what do we here,  
In this land of unbelief and fear?  
The land of dreams is better far,  
Above the light of the morning star.'

## MARY.

SWEET Mary, the first time she ever was there,  
Came into the ball-room among the fair ;  
The young men and maidens around her throng,  
And these are the words upon every tongue :

‘ An angel is here from the heavenly climes,  
Or again return the golden times ;  
Her eyes outshine every brilliant ray,  
She opens her lips—’tis the month of May.’

Mary moves in soft beauty and conscious delight,  
To augment with sweet smiles all the joys of the night,  
Nor once blushes to own to the rest of the fair  
That sweet love and beauty are worthy our care.

In the morning the villagers rose with delight,  
And repeated with pleasure the joys of the night,  
And Mary arose among friends to be free,  
But no friend from henceforward thou, Mary, shalt see.

Some said she was proud, some reviled her still more,  
And some when she passed by shut-to the door ;  
A damp cold came o’er her, her blushes all fled,  
Her lilies and roses are blighted and shed.

‘ O why was I born with a different face,  
Why was I not born like this envious race ?  
Why did heaven adorn me with bountiful hand,  
And then set me down in an envious land ?

'To be weak as a lamb and smooth as a dove,  
And not to raise envy, is called Christian love ;  
But if you raise envy your merit's to blame  
For planting such spite in the weak and the tame.

'I will humble my beauty, I will not dress fine,  
I will keep from the ball, and my eyes shall not shine ;  
And if any girl's lover forsakes her for me,  
I'll refuse him my hand and from envy be free.'

She went out in the morning attired plain and neat ;  
'Proud Mary's gone mad,' said the child in the street ;  
She went out in the morning in plain neat attire,  
And came home in the evening bespattered with mire.

She trembled and wept, sitting on the bed-side,  
She forgot it was night, and she trembled and cried ;  
She forgot it was night, she forgot it was morn,  
Her soft memory imprinted with faces of scorn.

With faces of scorn and with eyes of disdain,  
Like foul fiends inhabiting Mary's mild brain ;  
She remembers no face like the human divine ;  
All faces have envy, sweet Mary, but thine.

And thine is a face of sweet love in despair,  
And thine is a face of mild sorrow and care,  
And thine is a face of wild terror and fear  
That shall never be quiet till laid on its bier.

## AUGURIES OF INNOCENCE.

*To see a world in a grain of sand  
And a Heaven in a wild flower,  
Hold Infinity in the palm of your hand  
And Eternity in an hour.*

A ROBIN Redbreast in a cage  
Puts all Heaven in a rage;  
A dove-house filled with doves and pigeons  
Shudders hell through all its regions;  
A dog starved at his master's gate  
Predicts the ruin of the State;  
A game-cock clipped and armed for fight  
Doth the rising sun affright;  
A horse misused upon the road  
Calls to Heaven for human blood;  
Every wolf's and lion's howl  
Raises from hell a human soul;  
Each outcry of the hunted hare  
A fibre from the brain doth tear;  
A skylark wounded on the wing  
Doth make a cherub cease to sing.

He who shall hurt the little wren  
Shall never be beloved by men;  
He who the ox to wrath has moved  
Shall never be by woman loved;

He who shall train the horse to war  
Shall never pass the Polar Bar ;  
The wanton boy that kills the fly  
Shall feel the spider's enmity ;  
He who torments the chafer's sprite  
Weaves a bower in endless night.  
The caterpillar on the leaf  
Repeats to thee thy mother's grief :

The wild deer wandering here and there  
Keep the human soul from care :  
The lamb misused breeds public strife,  
And yet forgives the butcher's knife.  
Kill not the moth nor butterfly,  
For the last judgment draweth nigh ;  
The beggar's dog, and widow's cat,  
Feed them, and thou shalt grow fat.  
Every tear from every eye  
Becomes a babe in Eternity ;  
The bleat, the bark, bellow, and roar,  
Are waves, that beat on Heaven's shore.

The bat that flits at close of eve  
Has left the brain that won't believe ;  
The owl that calls upon the night  
Speaks the unbeliever's fright ;  
The gnat that sings his summer's song  
Poison gets from slander's tongue  
The poison of the snake and newt  
Is the sweat of envy's foot ;  
The poison of the honey bee  
Is the artist's jealousy ;  
The strongest poison ever known  
Came from Cæsar's laurel-crown.

Naught can deform the human race  
Like to the armourer's iron brace ;  
The soldier armed with sword and gun  
Palsied strikes the summer's sun ;  
When gold and gems adorn the plough,  
To peaceful arts shall envy bow ;  
The beggar's rags fluttering in air  
Do to rags the heavens tear ;  
The prince's robes and beggar's rags  
Are toadstools on the miser's bags ;  
One mite wrung from the labourer's hands  
Shall buy and sell the miser's lands,  
Or, if protected from on high,  
Shall that whole nation sell and buy ;  
The poor man's farthing is worth more  
Than all the gold on Afric's shore.  
The whore and gambler, by the state  
Licensed, build that nation's fate ;  
The harlot's cry from street to street  
Shall weave old England's winding-sheet ;  
The winner's shout, the loser's curse,  
Shall dance before dead England's hearse.

He who mocks the infant's faith  
Shall be mocked in age and death ;  
He who shall teach the child to doubt  
The rotting grave shall ne'er get out ;  
He who respects the infant's faith  
Triumphs over hell and death ;  
The babe is more than swaddling bands  
Throughout all these human lands ;  
Tools were made and born were hands,  
Every farmer understands.  
The questioner who sits so sly  
Shall never know how to reply ;



He who replies to words of doubt  
Doth put the light of knowledge out;  
A puddle, or the cricket's cry,  
Is to doubt a fit reply;  
The child's toys and the old man's reasons  
Are the fruits of the two seasons;  
The emmet's inch and eagle's mile  
Make lame philosophy to smile;  
A truth that's told with bad intent  
Beats all the lies you can invent.  
He who doubts from what he sees  
Will ne'er believe, do what you please;  
If the sun and moon should doubt,  
They'd immediately go out.

Every night and every morn  
Some to misery are born;  
Every morn and every night  
Some are born to sweet delight;  
Some are born to sweet delight,  
Some are born to endless night.  
Joy and woe are woven fine,  
A clothing for the soul divine;  
Under every grief and pine  
Runs a joy with silken twine.  
It is right it should be so;  
Man was made for joy and woe;  
And when this we rightly know,  
Safely through the world we go.

We are led to believe a lie  
When we see *with* not *through* the eye  
Which was born in a night to perish in a night  
When the soul slept in beams of light.

God appears and God is light  
To those poor souls who dwell in night ;  
But doth a human form display  
To those who dwell in realms of day.

## THE MENTAL TRAVELLER.

THE 'Mental Traveller' indicates an explorer of mental phenomena. The mental phenomenon here symbolized seems to be the career of any great Idea or intellectual movement—as, for instance, Christianity, chivalry, art, &c.—represented as going through the stages of—1. birth, 2. adversity and persecution, 3. triumph and maturity, 4. decadence through over-ripeness, 5. gradual transformation, under new conditions, into another renovated Idea, which again has to pass through all the same stages. In other words, the poem represents the action and re-action of Ideas upon society, and of society upon Ideas.

*Argument of the stanzas:* 2. The Idea, conceived with pain, is born amid enthusiasm. 3. If of masculine, enduring nature, it falls under the control and ban of the already existing state of society (the woman old). 5. As the Idea develops, the old society becomes moulded into a new society (the old woman grows young). 6. The Idea, now free and dominant, is united to society, as it were in wedlock. 8. It gradually grows old and effete, living now only upon the spiritual treasures laid up in the days of its early energy. 10. These still subserve many purposes of practical good, and outwardly the Idea is in its most flourishing estate, even when sapped at its roots. 11. The halo of authority and tradition, or prestige, gathering round the Idea, is symbolized in the resplendent babe born on his hearth. 13. This prestige deserts the Idea itself, and attaches to some individual, who usurps the honour due only to the Idea (as we may see in the case of papacy, royalty, &c.); and the Idea is eclipsed by its own very prestige, and assumed living representative. 14. The Idea wanders homeless till it can find a new community to mould ('until he can a maiden win'). 15 to 17. Finding whom, the Idea finds itself also living under strangely different

conditions. 18. The Idea is now "beguiled to infancy"—becomes a *new* Idea, in working upon a fresh community, and under altered conditions. 20. Nor are they yet thoroughly at one; she flees away while he pursues. 22. Here we return to the first state of the case. The Idea starts upon a new course—is a babe; the society it works upon has become an old society—no longer a fair virgin, but an aged woman. 24. The Idea seems so new and unwonted that, the nearer it is seen, the more consternation it excites. 26. None can deal with the Idea so as to develop it to the full, except the old society with which it comes into contact; and this can deal with it only by misusing it at first, whereby (as in the previous stage, at the opening of the poem) it is to be again disciplined into ultimate triumph.

## I.

I TRAVELLED through a land of men,  
A land of men and women too;  
And heard and saw such dreadful things  
As cold earth-wanderers never knew.

## 2.

For there the babe is born in joy  
That was begotten in dire woe;  
Just as we reap in joy the fruit  
Which we in bitter tears did sow.

## 3.

And if the babe is born a boy,  
He's given to a woman old,  
Who nails him down upon a rock,  
Catches his shrieks in cups of gold.

## 4.

She binds strong thorns around his head,  
She pierces both his hands and feet,  
She cuts his heart out at his side,  
To make it feel both cold and heat.

## 5.

Her fingers number every nerve  
Just as a miser counts his gold ;  
She lives upon his shrieks and cries,  
And she grows young as he grows old.

## 6.

Till he becomes a bleeding youth,  
And she becomes a virgin bright ;  
Then he rends up his manacles  
And binds her down for his delight.

## 7.

He plants himself in all her nerves  
Just as a husbandman his mould,  
And she becomes his dwelling-place  
And garden fruitful seventyfold.

## 8.

An aged shadow soon he fades,  
Wandering round an earthly cot,  
Full fillèd all with gems and gold  
Which he by industry had got.

## 9.

And these are the gems of the human soul,  
The rubies and pearls of a lovesick eye,  
The countless gold of the aching heart,  
The martyr's groan and the lover's sigh.

## 10.

They are his meat, they are his drink ;  
He feeds the beggar and the poor ;  
To the wayfaring traveller  
For ever open is his door.

## 11.

His grief is their eternal joy,  
They make the roofs and walls to ring;  
Till from the fire upon the hearth  
A little female babe doth spring.

## 12.

And she is all of solid fire  
And gems and gold, that none his hand  
Dares stretch to touch her baby form  
Or wrap her in his swaddling band.

## 13.

But she comes to the man she loves,  
If young or old or rich or poor;  
They soon drive out the aged host,  
A beggar at another's door.

## 14.

He wanders weeping far away,  
Until some other take him in;  
Oft blind and age-bent, sore distress'd,  
Until he can a maiden win.

## 15.

And to allay his freezing age,  
The poor man takes her in his arms;  
The cottage fades before his sight,  
The garden and its lovely charms.

## 16.

The guests are scattered through the land;  
For the eye altering alters all;  
The senses roll themselves in fear,  
And the flat earth becomes a ball.

## 17.

The stars, sun, moon, all shrink away,  
A desert vast without a bound,  
And nothing left to eat or drink,  
And a dark desert all around :

## 18.

The honey of her infant lips,  
The bread and wine of her sweet smile,  
The wild game of her roving eye,  
Do him to infancy beguile.

## 19.

For as he eats and drinks he grows  
Younger and younger every day,  
And on the desert wild they both  
Wander in terror and dismay.

## 20.

Like the wild stag she flees away ;  
Her fear plants many a thicket wild,  
While he pursues her night and day,  
By various arts of love beguiled.

## 21.

By various arts of love and hate,  
Till the wild desert's planted o'er  
With labyrinths of wayward love,  
Where roam the lion, wolf, and boar.

## 22.

Till he becomes a wayward babe,  
And she a weeping woman old ;  
Then many a lover wanders here,  
The sun and stars are nearer rolled ;

## 23.

The trees bring forth sweet ecstasy  
To all who in the desert roam ;  
Till many a city there is built,  
And many a pleasant shepherd's home.

## 24.

But when they find the frowning babe,  
Terror strikes through the region wide :  
They cry—'the babe—the babe is born !'  
And flee away on every side.

## 25.

For who dare touch the frowning form,  
His arm is withered to its root :  
Bears, lions, wolves, all howling flee,  
And every tree doth shed its fruit.

## 26.

And none can touch that frowning form  
Except it be a woman old ;  
She nails it down upon the rock,  
And all is done as I have told.



## IN A MYRTLE SHADE.

To a lovely myrtle bound,  
Blossoms showering all around,  
O how weak and weary I  
Underneath my myrtle lie!

Why should I be bound to thee,  
O my lovely myrtle tree?  
Love, free love, cannot be bound  
To any tree that grows on ground.

## WILLIAM BOND.

I WONDER whether the girls are mad,  
And I wonder whether they mean to kill,  
And I wonder if William Bond will die,  
For assuredly he is very ill.

He went to church on a May morning,  
Attended by fairies, one, two, and three ;  
But the angels of Providence drove them away,  
And he returned home in misery.

He went not out to the field nor fold,  
He went not out to the village nor town,  
But he came home in a black black cloud,  
And took to his bed, and there lay down.

And an angel of Providence at his feet,  
And an angel of Providence at his head,  
And in the midst a black black cloud,  
And in the midst the sick man on his bed.

And on his right hand was Mary Green,  
And on his left hand was his sister Jane,  
And their tears fell through the black black cloud  
To drive away the sick man's pain.

' O William, if thou dost another love,  
Dost another love better than poor Mary,  
Go and take that other to be thy wife,  
And Mary Green shall her servant be.'

'Yes, Mary, I do another love,  
Another I love far better than thee,  
And another I will have for my wife :  
Then what have I to do with thee ?

'For thou art melancholy pale,  
And on thy head is the cold moon's shine,  
But she is ruddy and bright as day,  
And the sunbeams dazzle from her eyne.'

Mary trembled, and Mary chilled,  
And Mary fell down on the right-hand floor,  
That William Bond and his sister Jane  
Scarce could recover Mary more.

When Mary woke and found her laid  
On the right-hand of her William dear,  
On the right-hand of his loved bed,  
And saw her William Bond so near ;

The fairies that fled from William Bond  
Danced around her shining head ;  
They danced over the pillow white,  
And the angels of Providence left the bed.

'I thought Love lived in the hot sunshine,  
But oh, he lives in the moony light ;  
I thought to find Love in the heat of day,  
But sweet Love is the comforter of night.

'Seek Love in the pity of others' woe,  
In the gentle relief of another's care,  
In the darkness of night and the winter's snow,  
With the naked and outcast,—seek Love there.'

## SCOFFERS.

MOCK on, mock on, Voltaire, Rousseau,  
Mock on, mock on ; 'tis all in vain ;  
You throw the sand against the wind,  
And the wind blows it back again.

And every sand becomes a gem  
Reflected in the beams divine ;  
Blown back, they blind the mocking eye,  
But still in Israel's paths they shine.

The atoms of Democritus  
And Newton's particles of light  
Are sands upon the Red Sea shore  
Where Israel's tents do shine so bright.

## THE AGONY OF FAITH.

'I SEE, I see,' the mother said,  
'My children will die for lack of bread !  
What more has the merciless tyrant said ?'  
The monk sat him down on her stony bed.

His eye was dry, no tear could flow,  
A hollow groan bespoke his woe ;  
He trembled and shuddered upon the bed ;  
At length with a feeble cry he said :—

'When God commanded this hand to write  
In the shadowy hours of deep midnight,  
He told me that all I wrote should prove  
The bane of all that on earth I love.

'My brother starved between two walls,  
Thy children's crying my soul appals ;  
I mocked at the rack and the griding chain,—  
My bent body mocks at their torturing pain.

'Thy father drew his sword in the north,  
With his thousands strong he is marched forth ;  
Thy brother hath armed himself in steel,  
To revenge the wrongs thy children feel.

'But vain the sword, and vain the bow,—  
They never can work war's overthrow ;  
The hermit's prayer and the widow's tear  
Alone can free the world from fear.

‘For a tear is an intellectual thing,  
And a sigh is the sword of an angel king ;  
And the bitter groan of a martyr’s woe  
Is an arrow from the Almighty’s bow.

‘The hand of vengeance found the bed  
To which the purple tyrant fled ;  
The iron hand crushed the tyrant’s head,  
And became a tyrant in his stead.’

## DAYBREAK.

To find the western path,  
Right through the gates of wrath  
    I urge my way ;  
Sweet morning leads me on ;  
With soft repentant moan  
    I see the break of day.

The war of swords and spears,  
Melted by dewy tears,  
    Exhales on high ;  
The sun is freed from fears,  
And with soft grateful tears  
    Ascends the sky.

## THAMES AND OHIO.

WHY should I care for the men of Thames  
And the cheating waters of chartered streams ;  
Or shrink at the little blasts of fear  
That the hireling blows into mine ear ?

Though born on the cheating banks of Thames—  
Though his waters bathed my infant limbs—  
The Ohio shall wash his stains from me ;  
I was born a slave, but I go to be free.

## YOUNG LOVE.

ARE not the joys of morning sweeter  
Than the joys of night?  
And are the vigorous joys of youth  
Ashamed of the light?

Let age and sickness silent rob  
The vineyard in the night;  
But those who burn with vigorous youth  
Pluck fruits before the light.

## RICHES.

SINCE all the riches of this world  
May be gifts from the devil and earthly kings,  
I should suspect that I worshipped the devil  
If I thanked my God for worldly things.

The countless gold of a merry heart,  
The rubies and pearls of a loving eye,  
The idle man never can bring to the mart  
Nor the cunning hoard up in his treasury.



## OPPORTUNITY.

HE who bends to himself a joy  
Does the wingèd life destroy ;  
But he who kisses the joy as it flies  
Lives in eternity's sunrise.

If you trap the moment before it's ripe,  
The tears of repentance you'll certainly wipe ;  
But if once you let the ripe moment go  
You can never wipe off the tears of woe.

## SEED SOWING.

'THOU hast a lapful of seed  
And this a fair country.  
Why dost thou not cast thy seed  
And live in it merrily?'

'Shall I cast it on the sand  
And turn it into fruitful land?  
For on no other ground can I sow my seed  
Without tearing up some stinking weed.'

## BARREN BLOSSOM.

I FEARED the fury of my wind  
Would blight all blossoms fair and true;  
And my sun it shined and shined,  
And my wind it never blew.

But a blossom fair or true  
Was not found on any tree;  
For all blossoms grew and grew  
Fruitless, false, though fair to see.

## NIGHT AND DAY.

SILENT, silent Night,  
Quench the holy light  
Of thy torches bright;

For, possessed of Day,  
Thousand spirits stray  
That sweet joys betray.

Why should joys be sweet  
Used with deceit,  
Nor with sorrows meet?

But an honest joy  
Doth itself destroy  
For a harlot coy.

## LOVE AND DECEIT.'

LOVE to faults is always blind,  
Always is to joy inclin'd,  
Lawless, winged and unconfin'd,  
And breaks all chains from every mind.

Deceit, to secrecy inclin'd,  
Moves lawful, courteous and refin'd,  
To everything but interest blind,  
And forges fetters for the mind.

There souls of men are bought and sold,  
And milk-fed infancy, for gold,  
And youth to slaughter-houses led,  
And beauty, for a bit of bread.

## COUPLETS AND FRAGMENTS.

## I.

I WALKED abroad on a snowy day,  
I asked the soft snow with me to play;  
She played and she melted in all her prime;  
And the winter called it a dreadful crime.

## II.

Abstinence sows sand all over  
The ruddy limbs and flaming hair;  
But desire gratified  
Plants fruits of life and beauty there.

## III.

The look of love alarms,  
Because 'tis filled with fire,  
But the look of soft deceit  
Shall win the lover's hire:  
Soft deceit and idleness,  
These are beauty's sweetest dress.

## IV.

To Chloe's breast young Cupid slyly stole,  
But he crept in at Myra's pocket-hole.

## V.

Great things are done when men and mountains meet;  
These are not done by jostling in the street.

## VI.

The errors of a wise man make your rule,  
Rather than the perfections of a fool.

## VII.

Some people admire the work of a fool,  
For it's sure to keep your judgment cool :  
It does not reproach you with want of wit ;  
It is not like a lawyer serving a writ.

## VIII.

He's a blockhead who wants a proof of what he can't  
perceive,  
And he's a fool who tries to make such a blockhead  
believe.

## IX.

If e'er I grow to man's estate,  
O give to me a woman's fate.  
May I govern all both great and small,  
Have the last word, and take the wall !

## X.

Her whole life is an epigram—smack, smooth, and nobly  
penn'd,  
Plaited quite neat to catch applause, with a strong noose  
at the end.

## XI.

To forgive enemies Hayley does pretend,  
Who never in his life forgave a friend.

## XII.

You say reserve and modesty *he* has  
Whose heart is iron, his head wood, and his face brass.  
The fox, the owl, the spider, and the bat  
By sweet reserve and modesty grow fat.

XIII.

*An Answer to the Parson.*

Why of the sheep do you not learn peace?  
Because I don't want you to shear my fleece.

XIV.

*Epitaph.*

Here lies John Trot, the friend of all mankind;  
He has not left one enemy behind.  
Friends were quite hard to find, old authors say;  
But now they stand in everybody's way.

XV.

Grown old in love from seven till seven times seven,  
I oft have wished for hell, for ease from heaven.

XVI.

Prayers plough not, praises reap not,  
Joys laugh not, sorrows weep not.

XVII.

The Sword sang on the barren heath,  
The Sickle in the fruitful field;  
The Sword he sang a song of death  
But could not make the Sickle yield.

XVIII.

O Lapwing, thou fliest across the heath,  
Nor seest the net that is spread beneath:  
Why dost thou not fly among the corn-fields?  
They cannot spread nets where a harvest yields.

XIX.

The Angel that presided o'er my birth  
Said: "Little creature, formed of joy and mirth,  
Go, love without the help of anything on earth."

## EPIGRAMS AND SATIRICAL PIECES ON ART AND ARTISTS.

### I

I ASKED of my dear friend orator Prig:  
 'What's the first part of oratory?' He said: 'A great wig.'  
 'And what is the second?' Then, dancing a jig  
 And bowing profoundly, he said: 'A great wig.'  
 'And what is the third?' Then he snored like a pig,  
 And, puffing his cheeks out, replied: 'A great wig.'  
 So if to a painter the question you push,  
 'What's the first part of painting?' he'll say: 'A paint-brush.'  
 'And what is the second?' with most modest blush,  
 He'll smile like a cherub, and say: 'A paint-brush.'  
 'And what is the third?' he'll bow like a rush,  
 With a leer in his eye, and reply: 'A paint-brush.'  
 Perhaps this is all a painter can want:  
 But look yonder,—that house is the house of Rembrandt.

### 2

'O dear mother Outline, of wisdom most sage,  
 'What's the first part of painting?' She said: 'Patronage.'  
 'And what is the second to please and engage?'  
 She frowned like a fury, and said: 'Patronage.'  
 'And what is the third?' She put off old age,  
 And smiled like a syren, and said: 'Patronage.'

### 3

*On the great encouragement given by English Nobility and  
 Gentry to Correggio, Rubens, Rembrandt, Reynolds, Gains-  
 borough, Catalani, and Dilberry Doodle.*

Give pensions to the learned pig,  
 Or the hare playing on a tabor;  
 Anglus can never see perfection  
 But in the journeyman's labour.

As the ignorant savage will sell his own wife  
For a button, a bauble, a bead, or a knife,—  
So the taught savage Englishman spends his whole fortune  
On a smear or a squall to destroy picture or tune :  
And I call upon Colonel Wardle  
To give these rascals a dose of caudle.

All pictures that's painted with sense or with thought  
Are painted by madmen, as sure as a groat ;  
For the greater the fool, in the Art the more blest,  
And when they are drunk they always paint best.  
They never can Raphaël it, Fuseli it, nor Blake it :  
If they can't see an outline, pray how can they make it ?  
All men have drawn outlines whenever they saw them ;  
Madmen see outlines, and therefore they draw them.

## 4

Seeing a Rembrandt or Correggio,  
Of crippled Harry I think and slobbering Joe ;  
And then I question thus : Are artists' rules  
To be drawn from the works of two manifest fools ?  
Then God defend us from the Arts, I say ;  
For battle, murder, sudden death, let's pray.  
Rather than be such a blind human fool,  
I'd be an ass, a hog, a worm, a chair, a stool.

## 5

*To English Connoisseurs.*

You must agree that Rubens was a fool,  
And yet you make him master of your school,  
And give more money for his slobberings  
Than you will give for Raphael's finest things.  
I understood Christ was a carpenter,  
And not a brewer's servant, my good Sir.



## 6

Sir Joshua praises Michael Angelo ;  
'Tis Christian meekness thus to praise a foe :—  
But 'twould be madness, all the world would say,  
Should Michael Angelo praise Sir Joshua.  
Christ used the Pharisees in a rougher way.

## 7

*To Flaxman.*

You call me mad ; 'tis folly to do so,—  
To seek to turn a madman to a foe.  
If you think as you speak, you are an ass ;  
If you do not, you are but what you was.

## 8

*To the same.*

I mock thee not, though I by thee am mockèd ;  
Thou call'st me madman, but I call thee blockhead.

## 9

Thank God, I never was sent to school  
To be flogged into following the style of a fool !

## PROSE WRITINGS.

DESCRIPTIVE CATALOGUE.

PUBLIC ADDRESS.

SIBYLLINE LEAVES.

THE GHOST OF ABEL.

A VISION OF THE LAST JUDGMENT:



Of the prose writings which now follow, the only ones already in print are the *Descriptive Catalogue* and the *Sibylline Leaves*. To the former of these, the *Public Address*, which here succeeds it, forms a fitting and most interesting pendant. It has been compiled from a very confused mass of MS. notes; but its purpose is unmistakeable as having been intended as an accompaniment to the engraving of *Chaucer's Pilgrims*. Both the *Catalogue* and *Address* abound in critical passages on painting and poetry, which must be ranked without reserve among the very best things ever said on either subject. Such inestimable qualities afford quite sufficient ground whereon to claim indulgence for eccentricities which are here and there laughably excessive, but which never fail to have a personal, even where they have no critical, value. As evidence of the writer's many moods, these pieces of prose are much best left unmutilated. Let us, therefore, risk misconstruction in some quarters; there are others where even the whimsical onslaughts on names no less great than those which the writer most highly honoured, and assertions as to this or that component quality of art being everything or nothing as it served the fiery plea in hand, will be discerned as the impatient extremes of a man who had his own work to do, which was of one kind, as he thought, against another, and who mainly did it too, in spite of that injustice without which no extremes might ever have been chargeable against him. And let us remember that, after all, having greatness in him, his *practice* of art included *all* great aims, whether they were such as his antagonistic moods railed against or no.

The *Vision* is almost as much a manifesto of opinion as either the *Catalogue* or *Address*. But its work is in a wider field, and one which, where it stretches beyond our own clear view, may not necessarily therefore have been a lost road to Blake himself. Certainly its grandeur and the sudden great things greatly said in it, as in all

Blake's prose, constitute it an addition to our opportunities of communing with him, and one which we may prize highly.

The constant decisive words in which Blake alludes, throughout these writings, to the plagiarisms of his contemporaries, are painful to read, and will be wished away ; but, still, it will be worth thinking whether their being said, or the need of their being said, is the greater cause for complaint. Justice, looking through surface accomplishments, greater nicety and even greater occasional judiciousness of execution, in the men whom Blake compares with himself, still perceives these words of his to be true. In each style of the art of a period, and more especially in the poetic style, there is often some one central initiatory man, to whom personally, if not to the care of the world, it is important that his creative power should be held to be his own, and that his ideas and slowly perfected materials should not be caught up before he has them ready for his own use. Yet, consciously or unconsciously, such an one's treasures and possessions are, time after time, while he still lives and needs them, sent forth to the world by others in forms from which he cannot perhaps again clearly claim what is his own, but which render the material useless to him henceforward. Hardly wonderful, after all, if for once an impetuous man of this kind is found raising the hue and cry, careless whether people heed him or no. It is no small provocation, be sure, when the gazers hoot you as outstripped in your race, and you know all the time that the man ahead, whom they shout for, is only a flying thief.

A DESCRIPTIVE  
CATALOGUE OF PICTURES,  
POETICAL AND HISTORICAL INVENTIONS,

PAINTED BY WILLIAM BLAKE IN WATER-COLOURS.

*Being the ancient method of FRESCO PAINTING revived :*  
and DRAWINGS for PUBLIC INSPECTION, and for SALE by PRIVATE  
CONTRACT.

London : Printed by D. N. SHURY, 7, Berwick Street, Soho, for  
J. BLAKE, 28, Broad Street, Golden Square. 1809.

CONDITIONS OF SALE.

- I. *One-third of the Price to be paid at the time of Purchase, and the remainder on Delivery.*
- II. *The Pictures and Drawings to remain in the Exhibition till its close, which will be the 29th of September, 1809: and the Picture of The Canterbury Pilgrims, which is to be engraved, will be sold only on condition of its remaining in the Artist's hands twelve months, when it will be delivered to the Buyer.*

NUMBER I.

*The Spiritual Form of Nelson guiding Leviathan, in whose wreathings  
are infolded the Nations of the Earth.*

CLEARNESS and precision have been the chief objects in painting these Pictures. Clear colours unmudded by oil, and firm and determinate lineaments unbroken by shadows, which ought to display and not to hide form, as is the practice of the latter Schools of Italy and Flanders.

## NUMBER II:—ITS COMPANION.

*The Spiritual Form of Pitt guiding Behemoth ; he is that Angel who, pleased to perform the Almighty's orders, rides on the whirlwind, directing the storms of war ; He is ordering the Reaper to reap the Vine of the Earth, and the Ploughman to plough up the Cities and Towers.*

THIS Picture also is a proof of the power of colours unsullied with oil or with any cloggy vehicle. Oil has falsely been supposed to give strength to colours : but a little consideration must show the fallacy of this opinion. Oil will not drink or absorb colour enough to stand the test of very little time and of the air. It deadens every colour it is mixed with, at its first mixture, and in a little time becomes a yellow mask over all that it touches. Let the works of modern Artists since Rubens' time witness the villany of some one at that time, who first brought Oil Painting into general opinion and practice : since which we have never had a Picture painted that could show itself by the side of an earlier production. Whether Rubens or Vandyke, or both, were guilty of this villany, is to be inquired in another work on Painting, and who first forged the silly story and known falsehood about John of Bruges inventing oil-colours : in the meantime let it be observed, that before Vandyke's time and in his time all the genuine Pictures are on Plaster or Whiting grounds, and none since.

The two Pictures of Nelson and Pitt are compositions of a mythological cast, similar to those Apotheoses of Persian, Hindoo, and Egyptian Antiquity, which are still preserved on rude monuments, being copies from some stupendous originals now lost, or perhaps buried till some happier age. The Artist having been taken in vision into the ancient republics, monarchies, and patriarchates of Asia, has seen those wonderful originals, called in the Sacred Scriptures the Cherubim, which were sculptured and painted on walls of Temples, Towers, Cities, Palaces, and erected in the highly cultivated States of Egypt, Moab, Edom, Aram, among the Rivers of Paradise—being originals from which the Greeks and Hetrurians copied Hercules Farnese, Venus of Medicis, Apollo Belvedere, and all the grand works of ancient art. They were executed in a very superior style to those justly admired copies, being with their accompaniments terrific and grand in the highest degree. The Artist has endeavoured

to emulate the grandeur of those seen in his vision, and to apply it to modern Heroes, on a smaller scale.

No man can believe that either Homer's Mythology, or Ovid's, was the production of Greece, or of Latium; neither will any one believe that the Greek statues, as they are called, were the invention of Greek Artists; perhaps the Torso is the only original work remaining; all the rest are evidently copies, though fine ones, from greater works of the Asiatic Patriarchs. The Greek Muses are daughters of Mnemosyne or Memory, and not of Inspiration or Imagination, therefore not authors of such sublime conceptions. Those wonderful originals seen in my visions were some of them one hundred feet in height; some were painted as pictures, and some carved as basso-relievos, and some as groups of statues, all containing mythological and recondite meaning, where more is meant than meets the eye. The Artist wishes it was now the fashion to make such monuments, and then he should not doubt of having a national commission to execute these two Pictures on a scale that is suitable to the grandeur of the nation, who is the parent of his heroes, in high-finished fresco, where the colours would be as pure and as permanent as precious stones though the figures were one hundred feet in height.

All Frescoes are as high-finished as miniatures or enamels, and they are known to be unchangeable; but oil, being a body itself, will drink or absorb very little colour, and, changing yellow, and at length brown, destroys every colour it is mixed with, especially every delicate colour. It turns every permanent white to a yellow and brown putty, and has compelled the use of that destroyer of colour, white-lead, which, when its protecting oil is evaporated, will become lead again. This is an awful thing to say to Oil Painters; they may call it madness, but it is true. All the genuine old little Pictures, called Cabinet Pictures, are in fresco and not in oil. Oil was not used, except by blundering ignorance, till after Vandyke's time; but the art of fresco-painting being lost, oil became a fetter to genius and a dungeon to art. But one convincing proof among many others that these assertions are true is, that real gold and silver cannot be used with oil, as they are in all the old pictures and in Mr. B.'s frescoes.



## NUMBER III.

*Sir Jeffery Chaucer and the Nine-and-twenty Pilgrims on their journey to Canterbury.*

THE time chosen is early morning, before sunrise, when the jolly company are just quitting the Tabarde Inn. The Knight and Squire with the Squire's Yeoman lead the Procession ; next follow the youthful Abbess, her nun, and three priests ; her greyhounds attend her :

‘Of small hounds had she that she fed  
With roast flesh, milk, and wastel bread.’

Next follow the Friar and Monk ; then the Tapiser, the Pardoner, and the Sompnour and Manciple. After these ‘Our Host,’ who occupies the centre of the cavalcade, directs them to the Knight as the person who would be likely to commence their task of each telling a tale in their order. After the Host follow the Shipman, the Haberdasher, the Dyer, the Franklin, the Physician, the Ploughman, the Lawyer, the Poor Parson, the Merchant, the Wife of Bath, the Miller, the Cook, the Oxford Scholar, Chaucer himself ; and the Reeve comes as Chaucer has described,—

‘And ever he rode hinderest of the rout.’

These last are issuing from the gateway of the Inn ; the Cook and the Wife of Bath are both taking their morning's draught of comfort. Spectators stand at the gateway of the Inn, and are composed of an old Man, a Woman, and Children.

The Landscape is an eastward view of the country, from the Tabarde Inn in Southwark, as it may be supposed to have appeared in Chaucer's time ; interspersed with cottages and villages. The first beams of the Sun are seen above the horizon ; some buildings and spires indicate the situation of the Great City. The Inn is a Gothic building, which Thynne in his Glossary says was the lodging of the Abbot of Hyde, by Winchester. On the Inn is inscribed its title, and a proper advantage is taken of this circumstance to describe the subject of the Picture. The words written over the gateway of the Inn are as follow : ‘The Tabarde Inn, by Henry Baillie, the lodgyng-house for Pilgrims who journey to St. Thomas's Shrine at Canterbury.’

The characters of Chaucer's Pilgrims are the characters which compose all ages and nations. As one age falls, another rises, different to mortal sight, but to immortals only the same; for we see the same characters repeated again and again, in animals, vegetables, minerals, and in men. Nothing new occurs in identical existence; Accident ever varies, Substance can never suffer change nor decay.

Of Chaucer's characters, as described in his *Canterbury Tales*, some of the names or titles are altered by time, but the characters themselves for ever remain unaltered; and consequently they are the physiognomies or lineaments of universal human life, beyond which Nature never steps. Names alter, things never alter. I have known multitudes of those who would have been monks in the age of monkery, who in this deistical age are deists. As Newton numbered the stars, and as Linnæus numbered the plants, so Chaucer numbered the classes of men.

The Painter has consequently varied the heads and forms of his personages into all Nature's varieties; the Horses he has also varied to accord to their Riders: the Costume is correct according to authentic monuments.

The Knight and Squire with the Squire's Yeoman lead the procession, as Chaucer has also placed them first in his prologue. The Knight is a true Hero, a good, great, and wise man; his whole-length portrait on horseback, as written by Chaucer, cannot be surpassed. He has spent his life in the field, has ever been a conqueror, and is that species of character which in every age stands as the guardian of man against the oppressor. His son is like him, with the germ of perhaps greater perfection still, as he blends literature and the arts with his warlike studies. Their dress and their horses are of the first rate, without ostentation, and with all the true grandeur that unaffected simplicity, when in high rank, always displays. The Squire's Yeoman is also a great character, a man perfectly knowing in his profession:

‘And in his hand he bare a mighty bow.’

Chaucer describes here a mighty man, one who in war is the worthy attendant on noble heroes.

The Prioress follows these with her female chaplain:

‘Another Nonne also with her had she,  
That was her Chapelaine, and Priestes three.’

This Lady is described also as of the first rank, rich and honoured. She has certain peculiarities and little delicate affectations, not unbecoming in her, being accompanied with what is truly grand and really polite; her person and face Chaucer has described with minuteness; it is very elegant, and was the beauty of our ancestors till after Elizabeth's time, when voluptuousness and folly began to be accounted beautiful.

Her companion and her three priests were no doubt all perfectly delineated in those parts of Chaucer's work which are now lost; we ought to suppose them suitable attendants on rank and fashion.

The Monk follows these with the Friar. The Painter has also grouped with these the Pardoner and the Sompneur and the Manciple, and has here also introduced one of the rich citizens of London;—characters likely to ride in company, all being above the common rank in life, or attendants on those who were so.

For the Monk is described, by Chaucer, as a man of the first rank in society, noble, rich, and expensively attended: he is a leader of the age, with certain humorous accompaniments in his character, that do not degrade, but render him an object of dignified mirth, but also with other accompaniments not so respectable.

The Friar is a character also of a mixed kind:

‘A friar there was, a wanton and a merry;’

but in his office he is said to be a ‘full solemn man:’ eloquent, amorous, witty, and satirical; young, handsome, and rich; he is a complete rogue; with constitutional gaiety enough to make him a master of all the pleasures of the world:

‘His neck was whitè as the fleur de lis,  
Thereto strong he was as a champioun.’

It is necessary here to speak of Chaucer's own character, that I may set certain mistaken critics right in their conception of the humour and fun that occur on the journey. Chaucer is himself the great poetical observer of men, who in every age is born to record and eternize its acts. This he does as a master, as a father and superior, who looks down on their little follies from the Emperor to the Miller: sometimes with severity, oftener with joke and sport.

Accordingly Chaucer has made his Monk a great tragedian, one who studied poetical art. So much so that the generous Knight is, in the compassionate dictates of his soul, compelled to cry out:





**CHAUCER'S CANTERBURY PILGRIMS**

— Printed from the original MS. of the Canterbury Tales, in the possession of the Earl of Arundel, by the Rev. John Gower, in 1795. —



Printed by W. B. Whittaker, 1855.





‘Ho,’ quoth the Knyght, ‘good Sir, no more of this;  
 That ye have said is right ynough, I wis,  
 And mokell more; for little heaviness  
 Is right enough for much folk, as I guess.  
 I say, for me, it is a great disease,  
 Whereas men have been in wealth and ease,  
 To heare of their sudden fall, alas!  
 And the contrary is joy and solas.’

The Monk’s definition of tragedy in the proem to his tale is worth repeating :

‘Tragedy is to tell a certain story,  
 As olde books us maken memory,  
 Of them that stood in great prosperity,  
 And be fallen out of high degree,  
 Into misery, and ended wretchedly.’

Though a man of luxury, pride, and pleasure, he is a master of art and learning, though affecting to despise it. Those who can think that the proud Huntsman and noble Housekeeper, Chaucer’s Monk, is intended for a buffoon or burlesque character, know little of Chaucer.

For the Host who follows this group, and holds the centre of the cavalcade, is a first-rate character, and his jokes are no trifles; they are always, though uttered with audacity, equally free with the Lord and the Peasant; they are always substantially and weightily expressive of knowledge and experience; Henry Baillie, the keeper of the greatest Inn of the greatest City; for such was the Tabarde Inn in Southwark, near London: our Host was also a leader of the age.

By way of illustration, I instance Shakspeare’s Witches in Macbeth. Those who dress them for the stage, consider them as wretched old women, and not, as Shakspeare intended, the Goddesses of Destiny; this shows how Chaucer has been misunderstood in his sublime work. Shakspeare’s Fairies also are the rulers of the vegetable world, and so are Chaucer’s; let them be so considered, and then the poet will be understood, and not else.

But I have omitted to speak of a very prominent character, the Pardoner, the Age’s Knave, who always commands and dominates over the high and low vulgar. This man is sent in every age for a rod and scourge and for a blight, for a trial of men, to divide the classes of men; he is in the most holy sanctuary, and he is suffered by Providence for wise ends, and has also his great use, and his grand leading destiny.



His companion the Sompnour is also a Devil of the first magnitude, grand, terrific, rich, and honoured in the rank of which he holds the destiny. The uses to society are perhaps equal of the Devil and of the Angel; their sublimity, who can dispute?

'In daunger had he at his owne guise,  
The younge girles of his diocese,  
And he knew well their counsel, &c.'

The principal figure in the next group is the Good Parson: an Apostle, a real Messenger of Heaven, sent in every age for its light and its warmth. This man is beloved and venerated by all, and neglected by all: he serves all, and is served by none. He is, according to Christ's definition, the greatest of his age: yet he is a Poor Parson of a town. Read Chaucer's description of the Good Parson, and bow the head and the knee to Him, Who, in every age, sends us such a burning and a shining light. Search, O ye rich and powerful, for these men and obey their counsel; then shall the golden age return. But alas! you will not easily distinguish him from the Friar or the Pardoner; they also are 'full solemn men,' and *their* counsel you will continue to follow.

I have placed by his side the Sergeant-at-Lawe, who appears delighted to ride in his company, and between him and his brother the Ploughman; as I wish men of Law would always ride with them, and take their counsel, especially in all difficult points. Chaucer's Lawyer is a character of great venerableness, a Judge, and a real master of the jurisprudence of his age.

The Doctor of Physic is in this group, and the Franklin, the voluptuous country gentleman; contrasted with the Physician, and, on his other hand, with two Citizens of London. Chaucer's characters live age after age. Every age is a Canterbury Pilgrimage; we all pass on, each sustaining one or other of these characters; nor can a child be born who is not one of these characters of Chaucer. The Doctor of Physic is described as the first of his profession: perfect, learned, completely Master and Doctor in his art. Thus the reader will observe that Chaucer makes every one of his characters perfect in his kind; every one is an Antique Statue, the image of a class, and not of an imperfect individual.

This group also would furnish substantial matter, on which volumes might be written. The Franklin is one who keeps open table, who is the genius of eating and drinking, the Bacchus; as the Doctor of Physic is the Æsculapius, the Host is the Silenus, the Squire is the

Apollo, the Miller is the Hercules, &c. Chaucer's characters are a description of the eternal Principles that exist in all ages. The Franklin is voluptuousness itself most nobly portrayed :

'It snowed in his house of meat and drink.'

The Ploughman is simplicity itself, with wisdom and strength for its stamina. Chaucer has divided the ancient character of Hercules between his Miller and his Ploughman. Benevolence is the Ploughman's great characteristic ; he is thin with excessive labour, and not with old age, as some have supposed :

'He woulde thresh, and thereto dike and delve,  
For Christe's sake, for every poore wight,  
Withouten hire, if it lay in his might.'

Visions of these eternal principles or characters of human life appear to poets in all ages ; the Grecian gods were the ancient Cherubim of Phœnicia ; but the Greeks, and since them the Moderns, have neglected to subdue the gods of Priam. These Gods are visions of the eternal attributes, or divine names, which, when erected into gods, become destructive to humanity. They ought to be the servants, and not the masters, of man or of society. They ought to be made to sacrifice to Man, and not man compelled to sacrifice to them ; for, when separated from man or humanity, who is Jesus the Saviour, the vine of eternity ? They are thieves and rebels, they are destroyers.

The Ploughman of Chaucer is Hercules in his supreme eternal state, divested of his spectrous shadow ; which is the Miller, a terrible fellow, such as exists in all times and places ; for the trial of men, to astonish every neighbourhood with brutal strength and courage, to get rich and powerful, to curb the pride of Man.

The Reeve and the Manciple are two characters of the most consummate worldly wisdom. The Shipman, or Sailor, is a similar genius of Ulyssean art, but with the highest courage superadded.

The Citizens and their Cook are each leaders of a class. Chaucer has been somehow made to number four citizens, which would make his whole company, himself included, thirty-one. But he says there were but nine-and-twenty in his company :

'Full nine-and-twenty in a company.'

The Webbe, or Weaver, and the Tapiser, or Tapestry Weaver, appear to me to be the same person ; but this is only an opinion,

for full nine-and-twenty may signify one more or less. But I daresay that Chaucer wrote 'A Webbe Dyer,' that is a Cloth Dyer :

'A Webbe Dyer and a Tapiser.'

The Merchant cannot be one of the Three Citizens, as his dress is different, and his character is more marked, whereas Chaucer says of his rich citizens :

'All were yclothèd in one liverie.'

The characters of Women Chaucer has divided into two classes, the Lady Prioress and the Wife of Bath. Are not these leaders of the ages of men? The Lady Prioress in some ages predominates, and in some the Wife of Bath, in whose character Chaucer has been equally minute and exact ; because she is also a scourge and a blight I shall say no more of her, nor expose what Chaucer has left hidden ; let the young reader study what he has said of her : it is useful as a scarecrow. There are of such characters born too many for the peace of the world.'

I come at length to the Clerk of Oxenford. This character varies from that of Chaucer, as the contemplative philosopher varies from the poetical genius. There are always these two classes of learned sages, the poetical and the philosophical. The Painter has put them side by side, as if the youthful clerk had put himself under the tuition of the mature poet. Let the Philosopher always be the servant and scholar of Inspiration, and all will be happy.

Such are the characters that compose this Picture, which was painted in self-defence against the insolent and envious imputation of unfitness for finished and scientific art, and this imputation most artfully and industriously endeavoured to be propagated among the public by ignorant hirelings. The Painter courts comparison with his competitors, who, having received fourteen hundred guineas and more from the profits of *his* designs in that well-known work, Designs for Blair's Grave, have left him to shift for himself ; while others, more obedient to an employer's opinions and directions, are employed, at a great expense, to produce works in succession to his by which they acquired public patronage. This has hitherto been his lot—to get patronage for others and then to be left and neglected, and his work, which gained that patronage, cried down as eccentricity and madness—as unfinished and neglected by the artist's violent temper : he is sure the works now exhibited will give the lie to such aspersions.

Those who say that men are led by interest are knaves. A knavish

character will often say, Of what interest is it to me to do so and so? I answer, of none at all, but the contrary, as you well know. It is of malice and envy that you have done this; hence I am aware of you, because I know that you act not from interest but from malice, even to your own destruction. It is therefore become a duty which Mr. B. owes to the Public, who have always recognised him and patronised him, however hidden by artifices, that he should not suffer such things to be done, or be hindered from the public Exhibition of his finished productions by any calumnies in future.

The character and expression in this Picture could never have been produced with Rubens' light and shadow, or with Rembrandt's, or anything Venetian or Flemish. The Venetian and Flemish practice is broken lines, broken masses, and broken colours: Mr. B.'s practice is unbroken lines, unbroken masses, and unbroken colours. Their art is to lose form; his art is to find form, and to keep it. His arts are opposite to theirs in all things.

As there is a class of men whose whole delight is in the destruction of men, so there is a class of artists whose whole art and science is fabricated for the purpose of destroying Art. Who these are is soon known: 'by their works ye shall know them.' All who endeavour to raise up a style against Raphael, Michael Angelo, and the Antique; those who separate Painting from Drawing; who look if a picture is well Drawn, and, if it is, immediately cry out that it cannot be well Coloured—those are the men.

But to show the stupidity of this class of men, nothing need be done but to examine my rival's prospectus.

The two first characters in Chaucer, the Knight and the Squire, he has put among his rabble; and indeed his prospectus calls the Squire 'the fop of Chaucer's age.' Now hear Chaucer:

'Of his Statüre, he was of even length,  
And wonderly deliver, and of great strength;  
And he had been sometime in chivauchy,  
In Flanders, in Artois, and in Picardy,  
And borne him well as of so litele space.'

Was this a fop?

'Well could he sit a horse, and faire ride,  
He could songs make, and eke well indite,  
Joust, and eke dance, portray, and well write.'

Was this a fop?

'Curteis he was, and meek, and serviceable;  
And kerft before his fader at the table.'

Was *this* a fop?

It is the same with all his characters ; he has done all by chance, or perhaps his fortune, money, money. According to his prospectus he has Three Monks ; these he cannot find in Chaucer, who has only One Monk, and that no vulgar character, as he has endeavoured to make him. When men cannot read, they should not pretend to paint. To be sure Chaucer is a little difficult to him who has only blundered over novels and catch-penny trifles of booksellers ; yet a little pains ought to be taken, even by the ignorant and weak. He has put the Reeve, a vulgar fellow, between his Knight and Squire, as if he was resolved to go contrary in everything to Chaucer, who says of the Reeve—

‘And ever he rode hinderest of the rout.’

In this manner he has jumbled his dumb dollies together, and is praised by his equals for it ; for both himself and his friend are equally masters of Chaucer’s language. They both think that the Wife of Bath is a young beautiful blooming damsel ; and H—— says, that she is the ‘Fair Wife of Bath,’ and that ‘the Spring appears in her cheeks.’ Now hear what Chaucer has made her say of herself, who is no modest one :

‘But Lord ! when it remembereth me  
Upon my youth and on my jollity,  
It tickleth me about the hearte root.  
Unto this day it doth my hearte boot  
That I have had my world as in my time ;  
But age, alas, that all will envenime,  
Hath me bireft, my beauty and my pith  
Let go ; farewell ! the devil go therewith !  
The flour is gone, there is no more to tell :  
The bran, as best I can, I now mote sell ;  
And yet, to be right merry, will I fond  
Now forth to telle of my fourth husbond.’

She has had four husbands, a fit subject for this painter ; yet the painter ought to be very much offended with his friend H——, who has called his ‘a common scene,’ and ‘very ordinary forms ;’ which is the truest part of all, for it is so, and very wretchedly so indeed. What merit can there be in a picture of which such words are spoken with truth ?

But the prospectus says that the Painter has represented Chaucer himself as a knave who thrusts himself among honest people to make game of and laugh at them ; though I must do justice to the Painter, and say that he has made him look more like a fool than a knave.

But it appears in all the writings of Chaucer, and particularly in his *Canterbury Tales*, that he was very devout, and paid respect to true enthusiastic superstition. He has laughed at his knaves and fools as I do now. But he has respected his True Pilgrims, who are a majority of his company, and are not thrown together in the random manner that Mr. S—— has done. Chaucer has nowhere called the Ploughman old, worn out with ‘age and labour,’ as the prospectus has represented him, and says that the picture has done so too. He is worn down with labour, but not with age. How spots of brown and yellow, smeared about at random, can be either young or old, I cannot see. It may be an old man ; it may be a young one ; it may be anything that a prospectus pleases. But I know that where there are no lineaments there can be no character. And what connoisseurs call touch, I know by experience, must be the destruction of all character and expression, as it is of every lineament.

The scene of Mr. S——’s Picture is by Dulwich Hills, which was not the way to Canterbury ; but perhaps the Painter thought he would give them a ride round about, because they were a burlesque set of scarecrows, not worth any man’s respect or care.

But the Painter’s thoughts being always upon gold, he has introduced a character that Chaucer has not—namely, a Goldsmith, for so the prospectus tells us. Why he has introduced a Goldsmith, and what is the wit of it, the prospectus does not explain. But it takes care to mention the reserve and modesty of the Painter ; this makes a good epigram enough :

‘The fox, the mole, the beetle, and the bat,  
By sweet reserve and modesty get fat.’

But the prospectus tells us that the Painter has introduced a ‘Sea Captain ;’ Chaucer has a Shipman, a Sailor, a Trading Master of a Vessel, called by courtesy Captain, as every master of a boat is ; but this does not make him a Sea Captain. Chaucer has purposely omitted such a personage, as it only exists in certain periods : it is the soldier by sea. He who would be a soldier in inland nations is a sea-captain in commercial nations.

All is misconceived, and its mis-execution is equal to its misconception. I have no objection to Rubens and Rembrandt being employed, or even to their living in a palace ; but it shall not be at the expense of Raphael and Michael Angelo living in a cottage, and in contempt and derision. I have been scorned long enough by

these fellows, who owe to me all that they have ; it shall be so no longer :

I found them blind, I taught them how to see ;  
And now they know neither themselves nor me.

#### NUMBER IV.

##### *The Bard, from Gray.*

On a rock, whose haughty brow  
Frown'd o'er old Conway's foaming flood,  
Robed in the sable garb of woe,  
With haggard eyes the Poet stood :  
Loose his beard and hoary hair  
Stream'd like a meteor to the troubled air.

Weave the warp, and weave the woof,  
The winding-sheet of Edward's race.

WEAVING the winding-sheet of Edward's race by means of sounds of spiritual music, and its accompanying expressions of articulate speech, is a bold, and daring, and most masterly conception, that the public have embraced and approved with avidity. Poetry consists in these conceptions ; and shall Painting be confined to the sordid drudgery of fac-simile representations of merely mortal and perishing substances, and not be, as poetry and music are, elevated into its own proper sphere of invention and visionary conception ? No, it shall not be so ! Painting, as well as poetry and music, exists and exults in immortal thoughts. If Mr. B.'s Canterbury Pilgrims had been done by any other power than that of the poetic visionary, it would have been as dull as his adversary's.

The Spirits of the murdered bards assist in weaving the deadly woof :

With me in dreadful harmony they join,  
And weave, with bloody hands, the tissue of thy line.

The connoisseurs and artists who have made objections to Mr. B.'s mode of representing spirits with real bodies would do well to consider that the Venus, the Minerva, the Jupiter, the Apollo, which they admire in Greek statues, are all of them representations of spiritual existences, of Gods immortal, to the mortal perishing organ of sight ; and yet they are embodied and organised in solid marble. Mr. B. requires the same latitude, and all is well. The Prophets

describe what they saw in Vision as real and existing men whom they saw with their imaginative and immortal organs ; the Apostles the same ; the clearer the organ the more distinct the object. A Spirit and a Vision are not, as the modern philosophy supposes, a cloudy vapour or a nothing : they are organised and minutely articulated beyond all that the mortal and perishing nature can produce. He who does not imagine in stronger and better lineaments, and in stronger and better light, than his perishing and mortal eye can see, does not imagine at all. The painter of this work asserts that all his imaginations appear to him infinitely more perfect and more minutely organised than anything seen by his mortal eye. Spirits are organised men : Moderns wish to draw figures without lines, and with great and heavy shadows ; are not shadows more unmeaning than lines, and more heavy ? Oh, who can doubt this ?

King Edward and his Queen Eleanor are prostrated, with their horses, at the foot of a rock on which the Bard stands ; prostrated by the terrors of his harp, on the margin of the River Conway, whose waves bear up a corse of a slaughtered bard at the foot of the rock. The armies of Edward are seen winding among the mountains :

‘ He wound with toilsome march his long array.’

Mortimer and Gloucester lie spell-bound behind their king.

The execution of this Picture is also in Water-colours, or Fresco.

## NUMBER V.

### *The Ancient Britons.*

*In the last Battle of King Arthur only Three Britons escaped ; these were the Strongest Man, the Beautifullest Man, and the Ugliest Man : these three marched through the field unsubdued, as Gods, and the Sun of Britain set, but shall arise again with tenfold splendour when Arthur shall awake from sleep, and resume his dominion over earth and ocean.*

THE three general classes of men who are represented by the most Beautiful, the most Strong, and the most Ugly, could not be represented by any historical facts but those of our own country, the Ancient Britons, without violating costume. The Britons (say



historians) were naked civilized men, learned, studious, abstruse in thought and contemplation ; naked, simple, plain, in their acts and manners ; wiser than after-ages. They were overwhelmed by brutal arms, all but a small remnant ; Strength, Beauty, and Ugliness escaped the wreck, and remain for ever unsubdued, age after age.

The British Antiquities are now in the Artist's hands ; all his visionary contemplations relating to his own country and its ancient glory, when it was, as it again shall be, the source of learning and inspiration—(Arthur was a name for the constellation Arcturus, or Boötes, the Keeper of the North Pole) ; and all the fables of Arthur and his Round Table ; of the warlike naked Britons ; of Merlin ; of Arthur's conquest of the whole world ; of his death, or sleep, and promise to return again ; of the Druid monuments, or temples ; of the pavement of Watling-street ; of London stone ; of the Caverns in Cornwall, Wales, Derbyshire, and Scotland ; of the Giants of Ireland and Britain ; of the elemental beings, called by us by the general name of Fairies ; and of these three who escaped, namely, Beauty, Strength, and Ugliness. Mr. B. has in his hands poems of the highest antiquity. Adam was a Druid, and Noah ; also Abraham was called to succeed the Druidical age, which began to turn allegoric and mental signification into corporeal command, whereby human sacrifice would have depopulated the earth. All these things are written in Eden. The Artist is an inhabitant of that happy country ; and if everything goes on as it has begun, the world of vegetation and generation may expect to be opened again to Heaven, through Eden, as it was in the beginning.

The Strong Man represents the human sublime ; the Beautiful Man represents the human pathetic, which was in the wars of Eden divided into male and female ; the Ugly Man represents the human reason. They were originally one man, who was fourfold ; he was self-divided, and his real humanity slain on the stems of generation, and the form of the fourth was like the Son of God. How he became divided is a subject of great sublimity and pathos. The Artist has written it under inspiration ; and will, if God please, publish it ; it is voluminous, and contains the ancient history of Britain, and the world of Satan and of Adam.

In the meantime he has painted this Picture, which supposes that in the reign of that British Prince, who lived in the fifth century, there were remains of those naked Heroes in the Welch Mountains ; they are there now—Gray saw them in the person of his Bard on

Snowdon ; there they dwell in naked simplicity ; happy is he who can see and converse with them above the shadows of generation and death. The Giant Albion was Patriarch of the Atlantic ; he is the Atlas of the Greeks, one of those the Greeks called Titans. The stories of Arthur are the acts of Albion, applied to a Prince of the fifth century, who conquered Europe, and held the empire of the world in the dark age, which the Romans never again recovered. In this Picture, believing with Milton the ancient British History, Mr. B. has done as all the ancients did, and as all the moderns who are worthy of fame—given the historical fact in its poetical vigour, so as it always happens, and not in that dull way that some Historians pretend, who, being weakly organised themselves, cannot see either miracle or prodigy : all is to them a dull round of probabilities and possibilities ; but the history of all times and places is nothing else but improbabilities and impossibilities—what we should say was impossible if we did not see it always before our eyes.

The antiquities of every Nation under Heaven are no less sacred than those of the Jews. They are the same thing ; as Jacob Bryant and all antiquaries have proved. How other antiquities came to be neglected and disbelieved, while those of the Jews are collected and arranged, is an inquiry worthy of both the Antiquarian and the Divine. All had originally one language, and one religion ; this was the religion of Jesus, the everlasting Gospel. Antiquity preaches the Gospel of Jesus. The reasoning historian, turner and twister of causes and consequences—such as Hume, Gibbon, and Voltaire—cannot, with all his artifice, turn or twist one fact or disarrange self-evident action and reality. Reasons and opinions concerning acts are not history ; acts themselves alone are history, and these are not the exclusive property of either Hume, Gibbon, or Voltaire, Echard, Rapin, Plutarch, or Herodotus. Tell me the Acts, O historian, and leave me to reason upon them as I please ; away with your reasoning and your rubbish ! All that is not action is not worth reading. Tell me the What ; I do not want you to tell me the Why and the How ; I can find that out myself, as well as you can, and I will not be fooled by you into opinions, that you please to impose, to disbelieve what you think improbable or impossible. His opinion who does not see spiritual agency is not worth any man's reading ; he who rejects a fact because it is improbable must reject all History, and retain doubts only.

It has been said to the Artist, Take the Apollo for the model of your Beautiful Man, and the Hercules for your Strong Man, and the

Dancing Faun for your Ugly Man. Now he comes to his trial. He knows that what he does is not inferior to the grandest Antiques. Superior it cannot be, for human power cannot go beyond either what he does, or what they have done; it is the gift of God, it is inspiration and vision. He had resolved to emulate those precious remains of antiquity; he has done so, and the result you behold; his ideas of strength and beauty have not been greatly different. Poetry as it exists now on earth, in the various remains of ancient authors, Music as it exists in old tunes or melodies, Painting and Sculpture as they exist in the remains of Antiquity and in the works of more modern genius—each is Inspiration, and cannot be surpassed; it is perfect and eternal. Milton, Shakspeare, Michael Angelo, Raphael, the finest specimens of Ancient Sculpture and Painting and Architecture, Gothic, Grecian, Hindoo, and Egyptian, are the extent of the human mind. The human mind cannot go beyond the gift of God, the Holy Ghost. To suppose that Art can go beyond the finest specimens of Art that are now in the world is not knowing what Art is; it is being blind to the gifts of the Spirit.

It will be necessary for the Painter to say something concerning his ideas of Beauty, Strength, and Ugliness.

The Beauty that is annexed and appended to folly, is a lamentable accident and error of the mortal and perishing life; it does but seldom happen; but with this unnatural mixture the sublime Artist can have nothing to do; it is fit for the burlesque. The Beauty proper for sublime art is lineaments, or forms and features, that are capable of being the receptacles of intellect; accordingly the Painter has given, in his Beautiful Man, his own idea of intellectual Beauty. The face and limbs that deviate or alter least, from infancy to old age, are the face and limbs of greatest Beauty and perfection.

The Ugly likewise, when accompanied and annexed to imbecility and disease, is a subject for burlesque and not for historical grandeur; the Artist has imagined his Ugly Man;—one approaching to the beast in features and form, his forehead small without frontals, his jaws large, his nose high on the ridge, and narrow, his chest and the stamina of his make comparatively little, and his joints and his extremities large; his eyes with scarce any whites, narrow and cunning, and everything tending toward what is truly Ugly—the incapability of intellect.

The Artist has considered his Strong Man as a receptacle of Wisdom, a sublime energiser; his features and limbs do not spindle out into length without strength, nor are they too large and unwieldy

for his brain and bosom. Strength consists in accumulation of power to the principal seat, and from thence a regular gradation and subordination ; strength is compactness, not extent nor bulk.

The Strong Man acts from conscious superiority, and marches on in fearless dependence on the divine decrees, raging with the inspirations of a prophetic mind. The Beautiful Man acts from duty, and anxious solicitude for the fates of those for whom he combats. The Ugly Man acts from love of carnage, and delight in the savage barbarities of war, rushing with sportive precipitation into the very teeth of the affrighted enemy.

The Roman Soldiers, rolled together in a heap before them, 'like the rolling thing before the whirlwind,' show each a different character, and a different expression of fear, or revenge, or envy, or blank horror or amazement, or devout wonder and unresisting awe.

The dead and the dying, Britons naked, mingled with armed Romans, strew the field beneath. Among these, the last of the Bards who was capable of attending warlike deeds is seen falling, outstretched among the dead and the dying, singing to his harp in the pains of death.

Distant among the mountains are Druid Temples, similar to Stonehenge. The Sun sets behind the mountains, bloody with the day of battle.

The flush of health in flesh, exposed to the open air, nourished by the spirits of forests and floods, in that ancient happy period which history has recorded, cannot be like the sickly daubs of Titian or Rubens. Where will the copier of nature, as it now is, find a civilized man who has been accustomed to go naked ? Imagination only can furnish us with colouring appropriate, such as is found in the Frescoes of Raphael and Michael Angelo : the disposition of forms always directs colouring in works of true art. As to a modern Man stripped from his load of clothing, he is like a dead corpse. Hence Rubens, Titian, Correggio, and all of that class, are like leather and chalk ; their men are like leather and their women like chalk, for the disposition of their forms will not admit of grand colouring ; in Mr. B.'s Britons, the blood is seen to circulate in their limbs ; he defies competition in colouring.

## NUMBER VI.

*'A Spirit vaulting from a Cloud to turn and wind a fiery Pegasus'—  
Shakspeare. The Horse of Intellect is leaping from the Cliffs of  
Memory and Reasoning; it is a barren Rock: it is also called the  
Barren Waste of Locke and Newton.*

THIS Picture was done many years ago, and was one of the first Mr. B. ever did in Fresco; fortunately, or rather providentially, he left it unblotted and unblurred, although molested continually by blotting and blurring demons; but he was also compelled to leave it unfinished for reasons that will be shown in the following.

## NUMBER VII.

*The Goats, an experiment Picture.*

THE subject is taken from the Missionary Voyage, and varied from the literal fact for the sake of picturesque scenery. The savage girls had dressed themselves with vine-leaves, and some goats on board the missionary ship stripped them off presently. This Picture was painted at intervals, for experiment with the colours, and is laboured to a superabundant blackness; it has however that about it which may be worthy the attention of the Artist and Connoisseur for reasons that follow.

## NUMBER VIII.

*The spiritual Preceptor, an experiment Picture.*

THIS subject is taken from the Visions of Emanuel Swedenborg (Universal Theology, No. 623). The Learned, who strive to ascend into Heaven by means of learning, appear to Children like dead horses, when repelled by the celestial spheres. The works of this visionary are well worthy the attention of Painters and Poets; they are foundations for grand things; the reason they have not been more attended to is, because corporeal demons have gained a predominance; who the leaders of these are, will be shown below. Unworthy Men, who gain fame among Men, continue to govern mankind after death, and, in their spiritual bodies, oppose the spirits

of those who worthily are famous ; and, as Swedenborg observes, by entering into disease and excrement, drunkenness and concupiscence, they possess themselves of the bodies of mortal men, and shut the doors of mind and of thought, by placing Learning above Inspiration. O Artist ! you may disbelieve all this, but it shall be at your own peril.

## NUMBER IX.

*Satan calling up his Legions, from Milton's Paradise Lost ; a composition for a more perfect Picture afterward executed for a Lady of high rank. An experiment Picture.*

THIS Picture was likewise painted at intervals, for experiment on colours, without any oily vehicle ; it may be worthy of attention, not only on account of its composition, but of the great labour which has been bestowed on it ; that is, three or four times as much as would have finished a more perfect Picture. The labour has destroyed the lineaments : it was with difficulty brought back again to a certain effect, which it had at first, when all the lineaments were perfect.

These Pictures, among numerous others painted for experiment, were the result of temptations and perturbations, labouring to destroy Imaginative power, by means of that infernal machine, called Chiaro Oscuro, in the hands of Venetian and Flemish Demons ; whose enmity to the Painter himself, and to all Artists who study in the Florentine and Roman Schools, may be removed by an exhibition and exposure of their vile tricks. They cause that everything in art shall become a Machine. They cause that the execution shall be all blocked up with brown shadows. They put the original Artist in fear and doubt of his own original conception. The spirit of Titian was particularly active in raising doubts concerning the possibility of executing without a model ; and, when once he had raised the doubt, it became easy for him to snatch away the vision time after time ; for when the Artist took his pencil, to execute his ideas, his power of imagination weakened so much, and darkened, that memory of nature and of Pictures of the various Schools possessed his mind, instead of appropriate execution, resulting from the inventions ; like walking in another man's style, or speaking or looking in another man's style and manner, inappropriate and repugnant to your own individual character ; tormenting the true Artist, till he leaves the Florentine, and adopts the Venetian

practice, or does as Mr. B. has done—has the courage to suffer poverty and disgrace, till he ultimately conquers.

Rubens is a most outrageous demon, and by infusing the remembrances of his Pictures, and style of execution, hinders all power of individual thought : so that the man who is possessed by this demon loses all admiration of any other Artist but Rubens, and those who were his imitators and journeymen. He causes to the Florentine and Roman Artist fear to execute ; and, though the original conception was all fire and animation, he loads it with hellish brownness, and blocks up all its gates of light, except one, and that one he closes with iron bars, till the victim is obliged to give up the Florentine and Roman practice, and adopt the Venetian and Flemish.

Correggio is a soft and effeminate and consequently a most cruel demon, whose whole delight is to cause endless labour to whoever suffers him to enter his mind. The story that is told in all Lives of the Painters, about Correggio being poor and but badly paid for his Pictures, is altogether false ; he was a petty Prince, in Italy, and employed numerous Journeymen in manufacturing (as Rubens and Titian did) the Pictures that go under his name. The manual labour in these Pictures of Correggio is immense, and was paid for originally at the immense prices that those who keep manufactories of art always charge to their employers, while they themselves pay their journeymen little enough. But, though Correggio was not poor, he will make any true artist so, who permits him to enter his mind and take possession of his affections ; he infuses a love of soft and even tints without boundaries, and of endless reflected lights, that confuse one another, and hinder all correct drawing from appearing to be correct ; for if one of Raphael's or Michael Angelo's figures was to be traced, and Correggio's reflections and refractions to be added to it, there would soon be an end of proportion and strength, and it would be weak, and pappy, and lumbering, and thick-headed, like his own works ; but then it would have softness and evenness, by a twelvemonth's labour, where a month would with judgment have finished it better and higher ; and the poor wretch who executed it would be the Correggio that the Life-writers have written of—a drudge and a miserable man, compelled to softness by poverty. I say again, O Artist ! you may disbelieve all this, but it shall be at your own peril.

*Note.*—These experiment Pictures have been bruised and knocked about, without mercy, to try all experiments.

## NUMBER X.

*The Bramins.—A Drawing.*

THE subject is, Mr. Wilkin translating the Geeta; an ideal design, suggested by the first publication of that part of the Hindoo Scriptures translated by Mr. Wilkin. I understand that my Costume is incorrect; but in this I plead the authority of the ancients, who often deviated from the Habits, to preserve the Manners, as in the instance of Laocoon, who, though a priest, is represented naked.

## NUMBER XI.

*The Body of Abel found by Adam and Eve; Cain, who was about to bury it, fleeing from the face of his Parents.—A Drawing.*

## NUMBER XII.

*The Soldiers casting Lots for Christ's Garment.—A Drawing.*

## NUMBER XIII.

*Jacob's Ladder.—A Drawing.*

## NUMBER XIV.

*The Angels hovering over the Body of Jesus in the Sepulchre.—A Drawing.*

THE above four drawings the Artist wishes were in Fresco, on an enlarged scale, to ornament the altars of churches, and to make England, like Italy, respected by respectable men of other countries on account of Art. It is not the want of genius that can hereafter be laid to our charge; the Artist who has done these Pictures and Drawings will take care of that; let those who govern the Nation take care of the other. The times require that every one should speak out boldly; England expects that every man should do his duty, in Arts, as well as in Arms or in the Senate.



## NUMBER XV.

*Ruth.—A Drawing.*

THIS Design is taken from that most pathetic passage in the Book of Ruth where Naomi, having taken leave of her daughters-in-law, with intent to return to her own country, Ruth cannot leave her, but says, 'Whither thou goest, I will go ; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge : thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God : where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried : God do so to me, and more also, if aught but death part thee and me.'

The distinction that is made in modern times between a Painting and a Drawing proceeds from ignorance of art. The merit of a Picture is the same as the merit of a Drawing. The dauber daubs his Drawings ; he who draws his Drawings draws his Pictures. There is no difference between Raphael's Cartoons and his Frescoes, or Pictures, except that the Frescoes, or Pictures, are more finished. When Mr. B. formerly painted in oil colours, his Pictures were shown to certain painters and connoisseurs, who said that they were very admirable Drawings on canvas, but not Pictures ; but they said the same of Raphael's Pictures. Mr. B. thought this the greatest or compliments, though it was meant otherwise. If losing and obliterating the outline constitutes a Picture, Mr. B. will never be so foolish as to do one. Such art of losing the outlines is the art of Venice and Flanders ; it loses all character, and leaves what some people call expression : but this is a false notion of expression ; expression cannot exist without character as its stamina ; and neither character nor expression can exist without firm and determinate outline. Fresco Painting is susceptible of higher finishing than Drawing on Paper, or than any other method of Painting. But he must have a strange organisation of sight who does not prefer a Drawing on Paper to a Daubing in Oil by the same master, supposing both to be done with equal care.

The great and golden rule of art, as well as of life, is this : That the more distinct, sharp, and wiry the bounding line, the more perfect the work of art ; and the less keen and sharp, the greater is the evidence of weak imitation, plagiarism, and bungling. Great inventors, in all ages, knew this : Protogenes and Apelles knew each other by this line. Raphael and Michael Angelo, and Albert Dürer, are known by this and this alone. The want of this determinate and bounding form evidences the idea of want in the artist's mind,

and the pretence of the plagiary in all its branches. How do we distinguish the oak from the beech, the horse from the ox, but by the bounding outline? How do we distinguish one face or countenance from another, but by the bounding line and its infinite inflexions and movements? What is it that builds a house and plants a garden, but the definite and determinate? What is it that distinguishes honesty from knavery, but the hard and wiry line of rectitude and certainty in the actions and intentions? Leave out this line and you leave out life itself; all is chaos again, and the line of the Almighty must be drawn out upon it before man or beast can exist. Talk no more then of Correggio or Rembrandt, or any other of those plagiaries of Venice or Flanders. They were but the lame imitators of lines drawn by their predecessors, and their works prove themselves contemptible disarranged imitations, and blundering misapplied copies.'

## NUMBER XVI.

*The Penance of Jane Shore in St. Paul's Church.—A Drawing.*

THIS Drawing was done above Thirty Years ago, and proves to the Author, and he thinks will prove to any discerning eye, that the productions of our youth and of our maturer age are equal in all essential points. If a man is master of his profession, he cannot be ignorant that he is so; and, if he is not employed by those who pretend to encourage art, he will employ himself, and laugh in secret at the pretences of the ignorant, while he has every night dropped into his shoe—as soon as he puts it off, and puts out the candle, and gets into bed—a reward for the labours of the day, such as the world cannot give; and patience and time await to give him all that the world can give.

## PUBLIC ADDRESS

*Intended to accompany Blake's Engraving of the Canterbury Pilgrimage.*

THE originality of this production makes it necessary to say a few words.

In this plate Mr. Blake has resumed the style with which he set out in life, of which Heath and Stothard were the awkward imitators at that time. It is the style of Albert Dürer and the old engravers, which cannot be imitated by any one who does not understand drawing, and which, according to Heath, and Stothard, Flaxman, and even Romney, spoils an engraver; for each of these men has repeatedly asserted this absurdity to me, in condemnation of my work, and approbation of Heath's lame imitation; Stothard being such a fool as to suppose that his blundering blurs can be made out and delineated by any engraver who knows how to cut dots and lozenges, equally well with those little prints which I engraved after him four-and-twenty years ago, and by which he got his reputation as a draughtsman.

If men of weak capacities have alone the power of execution in art, Mr. Blake has now put to the test. If to invent and to draw well hinders the executive power in art, and his strokes are still to be condemned because they are unlike those of artists who are unacquainted with drawing, is now to be decided by the public. Mr. Blake's inventive powers, and his scientific knowledge of drawing, are on all hands

acknowledged ; it only remains to be certified whether physiognomic strength and power are to give place to imbecility. In a work of art it is not fine tints that are required, but fine forms ; fine tints without fine forms are always the subterfuge of the blockhead.

I account it a public duty respectfully to address myself to the Chalcographic Society, and to express to them my opinion (the result of the expert practice and experience of many years), that engraving as an art is lost to England, owing to an artfully propagated opinion that drawing spoils an engraver. I request the Society to inspect my print, of which drawing is the foundation, and indeed the superstructure : it is drawing on copper, as painting ought to be drawing on canvas or any other surface, and nothing else. I request, likewise, that the Society will compare the prints of Bartolozzi, Woollett, Strange, &c., with the old English portraits ; that is, compare the modern art with the art as it existed previous to the entrance of Vandyck and Rubens into the country, since which event engraving is lost ; and I am sure the result of the comparison will be that the Society must be of my opinion, that engraving, by losing drawing, has lost all character and all expression, without which the art is lost.

There is not, because there cannot be, any difference of effect in the pictures of Rubens and Rembrandt : when you have seen one of their pictures, you have seen all. It is not so with Raphael, Giulio Romano, Albert Dürer, Michael Angelo ; every picture of theirs has a different and appropriate effect. What man of sense will lay out his money upon the life's labours of imbecility and imbecility's journey-men, or think to educate a fool how to build a universe with farthing balls ? The contemptible idiots who have been called great men of late years ought to rouse the public indignation of men of sense in all professions. Yet I do not shrink from the comparison in either relief or strength of colour with either Rembrandt or Rubens ; on the contrary, I

court the comparison, and fear not the result,—but not in a dark corner. Their effects are, in every picture, the same ; mine are in every picture different. That vulgar epigram in art, Rembrandt's *Hundred Guilders* has entirely put an end to all genuine and appropriate effect : all, both morning and night, is now a dark cavern ; it is the fashion.

I hope my countrymen will excuse me if I tell them a wholesome truth. Most Englishmen, when they look at pictures, immediately set about searching for points of light, and clap the picture into a dark corner. This, when done by grand works, is like looking for epigrams in Homer. A point of light is a witticism : many are destructive of all art ; one is an epigram only, and no good work can have them. Raphael, Michael Angelo, Albert Dürer, Giulio Romano, are accounted ignorant of that epigrammatic wit in art, because they avoid it as a destructive machine, as it is.

Mr. Blake repeats that there is not one character or expression in this print which could be produced with the execution of Titian, Rubens, Correggio, Rembrandt, or any of that class. Character and expression can only be expressed by those who feel them. Even Hogarth's execution cannot be copied or improved. Gentlemen of fortune, who give great prices for pictures, should consider the following : When you view a collection of pictures, painted since Venetian art was the fashion, or go into a modern exhibition, with a very few exceptions every picture has the same effect—a piece of machinery of points of light to be put into a dark hole.

Rubens's 'Luxembourg Gallery' is confessed on all hands to be the work of a blockhead ; it bears this evidence in its face. How can its execution be any other than the work of a blockhead ? Bloated gods, Mercury, Juno, Venus, and the rattletraps of mythology, and the lumber of an awkward French palace, are thrown together around clumsy and rickety princes and princesses, higgledy-piggledy. On the contrary, Giulio Romano's 'Palace of T. at Mantua' is allowed on all hands to be the production of a man of the

most profound sense and genius ; and yet his execution is pronounced by English connoisseurs (and Reynolds their doll) to be unfit for the study of the painter. Can I speak with too great contempt of such contemptible fellows ? If all the princes in Europe, like Louis XIV. and Charles I., were to patronise such blockheads, I, William Blake, a mental prince, would decollate and hang their souls as guilty of mental high-treason. He who could represent Christ uniformly like a drayman must have queer conceptions—consequently his execution must have been as queer : and those must be queer fellows who give great sums for such nonsense and think it fine art. Who that has eyes cannot see that Rubens and Correggio must have been very weak and vulgar fellows ? And we are to imitate their execution ! This is like what Sir Francis Bacon says : that a healthy child should be taught and compelled to walk like a cripple, while the cripple must be taught to walk like healthy people. Oh rare wisdom !

The wretched state of the arts in this country and in Europe, originating in the wretched state of political science (which is the science of sciences), demands a firm and determinate conduct on the part of artists, to resist the contemptible counter-arts, established by such contemptible politicians as Louis XIV., and originally set on foot by Venetian picture-traders, music-traders, and rhyme-traders, to the destruction of all true art, as it is this day. To recover art has been the business of my life to the Florentine original, and if possible, to go beyond that original : this I thought the only pursuit worthy of a man. To imitate I abhor : I obstinately adhere to the true style of art, such as Michael Angelo, Raphael, Giulio Romano, Albert Dürer, left it. I demand, therefore, of the amateurs of art the encouragement which is my due ; if they continue to refuse, theirs is the loss, not mine, and theirs is the contempt of posterity. I have enough in the approbation of fellow-labourers : this is my glory and exceeding great reward. I go on, and nothing can hinder my course.

While the works of Pope and Dryden are looked upon as the same art with those of Shakespæare and Milton, while the works of Strange and Woollett are looked upon as the same art with those of Raphael and Albert Dürer, there can be no art in a nation but such as is subservient to the interest of the monopolising trader. Englishmen! rouse yourselves from the fatal slumber into which booksellers and trading dealers have thrown you, under the artfully propagated pretence that a translation or a copy of any kind can be as honourable to a nation as an original, belieing the English character in that well-known saying, Englishmen improve what others invent. This even Hogarth's works prove a detestable falsehood. No man can improve an original invention, nor can an original invention exist without execution organised, delineated, and articulated either by God or man: I do not mean smoothed up and niggled and poco-pen'd, and all the beauties paled out, blurred, and blotted; but drawn with a firm and decided hand at once, like Michael Angelo, Shakespeare and Milton. I have heard many people say: 'Give me the ideas—it is no matter what words you put them into;' and others say: 'Give me the design, it is no matter for the execution.' These people knew enough of artifice, but nothing of art. Ideas cannot be given but in their minutely appropriate words, nor can a design be made without its minutely appropriate execution. The unorganised blots and blurs of Rubens and Titian are not art, nor can their method ever express ideas or imaginations, any more than Pope's metaphysical jargon of rhyming. Unappropriate execution is the most nauseous of all affectation and foppery. He who copies does not execute—he only imitates what is already executed. Execution is only the result of invention.

I do not condemn Rubens, Rembrandt, or Titian, because they did not understand drawing, but because they did not understand colouring; how long shall I be forced to beat this into men's ears? I do not condemn Strange or Woollett because they did not understand drawing, but because they

did not understand engraving. I do not condemn Pope or Dryden because they did not understand imagination, but because they did not understand verse. Their colouring, graving, and verse, can never be applied to art: that is not either colouring, graving, or verse, which is inappropriate to the subject. He who makes a design must know the effect and colouring proper to be put to that design, and will never take that of Rubens, Rembrandt, or Titian, to turn that which is soul and life into a mill or machine.

They say there is no straight line in nature. This is a lie, like all that they say, for there is every line in nature. But I will tell them what there is not in nature. An even tint is not in nature—it produces heaviness. Nature's shadows are ever varying, and a ruled sky that is quite even never can produce a natural sky. The same with every object in a picture—its spots are its beauties. Now, gentlemen critics, how do you like this? You may rage; but what I say I will prove by such practice (and have already done so) that you will rage to your own destruction. Woollett I knew very intimately by his intimacy with Basire, and I knew him to be one of the most ignorant fellows that I ever knew. A machine is not a man nor a work of art; it is destructive of humanity and of art. Woollett, I know, did not know how to grind his graver; I know this. He has often proved his ignorance before me at Basire's, by laughing at Basire's knife-tools, and ridiculing the forms of Basire's other gravers, till Basire was quite dashed and out of conceit with what he himself knew. But his impudence had a contrary effect on me.

A certain portrait-painter said to me in a boasting way: 'Since I have practised painting, I have lost all idea of drawing.' Such a man must know that I looked upon him with contempt. He did not care for this any more than West did, who hesitated and equivocated with me upon the same subject; at which time he asserted that Woollett's prints were superior to Basire's, because they had more labour and



care. Now this is contrary to the truth. Woollett did not know how to put so much labour into a head or foot as Basire did ; he did not know how to draw the leaf of a tree. All his study was clean strokes and mossy tints ; how then should he be able to make use of either labour or care, unless the labour and care of imbecility ? The life's labour of mental weakness scarcely equals one hour of the labour of ordinary capacity, like the full gallop of the gouty man to the ordinary walk of youth and health. I allow that there is such a thing as high-finished ignorance, as there may be a fool or a knave in an embroidered coat ; but I say that the embroidery of the ignorant finisher is not like a coat made by another, but is an emanation from ignorance itself, and its finishing is like its master—the life's labour of five hundred idiots, for he never does the work himself.

What is called the English style of engraving, such as it proceeded from the toilets of Woollett and Strange (for theirs were Fribble's toilets) can never produce character and expression. I knew the men intimately from their intimacy with Basire, my master, and knew them both to be heavy lumps of cunning and ignorance, as their works show to all the Continent, who laugh at the contemptible pretences of Englishmen to improve art before they even know the first beginnings of art. I hope this print will redeem my country from this coxcomb situation, and show that it is only *some* Englishmen, and not all, who are thus ridiculous in their pretences. Advertisements in newspapers are no proofs of popular approbation, but, often the contrary. A man who pretends to improve fine art does not know what fine art is. Ye English engravers must come down from your high flights ; ye must condescend to study Marc Antonio and Albert Dürer ; ye must begin before you attempt to finish or improve : and when you have begun, you will know better than to think of improving what cannot be improved. It is very true what you have said for these thirty-two years : I am mad, or else you are so. Both of us cannot be in our

right senses. Posterity will judge by our works. Woollett's and Strange's works are like those of Titian and Correggio, the life's labour of ignorant journeymen, suited to the purposes of commerce, no doubt, for commerce cannot endure individual merit; its insatiable maw must be fed by what all can do equally well; at least it is so in England, as I have found to my cost these forty years. Commerce is so far from being beneficial to arts or to empires that it is destructive of both, as all their history shows, for the above reason of individual merit being its great hatred. Empires flourish till they become commercial, and then they are scattered abroad to the four winds.

Woollett's best works were etched by Jack Browne; Woollett etched very ill himself. *The Cottagers*, and *Jocund Peasants*, the *Views in Kew Garden*, *Foot's-Cray*, and *Diana and Actæon*, and, in short, all that are called Woollett's, were etched by Jack Browne; and in Woollett's works the etching is all, though even in these a single leaf of a tree is never correct. Strange's prints were, when I knew him, all done by Aliamet and his French journeymen, whose names I forget. I also knew something of John Cooke, who engraved after Hogarth. Cooke wished to give Hogarth what he could take from Raphael, that is, outline, and mass, and colour; but he could not. Such prints as Woollett and Strange produce will do for those who choose to purchase the life's labour of ignorance and imbecility in preference to the inspired monuments of genius and inspiration.

In this manner the English public have been imposed upon for many years, under the impression that engraving and painting are somewhat else besides drawing. Painting is drawing on canvas, and engraving is drawing on copper, and nothing else; and he who pretends to be either painter or engraver without being a master of drawing, is an impostor. We may be clever as pugilists, but as artists, we are, and have long been, the contempt of the Continent. Gravelot once said to my master Basire: 'De English may be

very clever in deir own opinions, but dey do not draw de draw.'

Whoever looks at any of the great and expensive works of engraving that have been published by English traders must feel a loathing and disgust; and accordingly most Englishmen have a contempt for art, which is the greatest curse that can fall upon a nation.

The modern chalcographic connoisseurs and amateurs admire only the work of the journeyman picking out of whites and blacks in what are called tints. They despise drawing, which despises them in return. They see only whether everything is toned down but one spot of light. Mr. Blake submits to a more severe tribunal: he invites the admirers of old English portraits to look at his print.

An example of these contrary arts is given us in the characters of Milton and Dryden, as they are written in a poem signed with the name of Nat Lee, which perhaps he never wrote and perhaps he wrote in a paroxysm of insanity; in which it is said that Milton's poem is a rough unfinished piece, and that Dryden has finished it. Now let Dryden's Fall and Milton's Paradise be read, and I will assert that everybody of understanding must cry out shame on such niggling and poco-pen as Dryden has degraded Milton with. But at the same time I will allow that stupidity will prefer Dryden, because it is in rhyme and monotonous sing-song, sing-song from beginning to end. Such are Bartolozzi, Woollett, and Strange.

Men think that they can copy nature as correctly as I copy imagination. This they will find impossible: and all the copies, or pretended copies, of nature, from Rembrandt to Reynolds, prove that nature becomes to its victim nothing but blots and blurs. Why are copies of nature incorrect, while copies of imagination are correct? This is manifest to all. The English artist may be assured that he is doing an injury and injustice to his country while he studies and imitates the effects of nature. England will never rival Italy

while we servilely copy what the wise Italians, Raphael and Michael Angelo, scorned, nay abhorred, as Vasari tells us. What kind of intellect must he have who sees only the colours of things, and not the forms of things? No man of sense can think that an imitation of the objects of nature is the art of painting, or that such imitation (which any one may easily perform) is worthy of notice—much less that such an art should be the glory and pride of a nation. The Italians laugh at the English connoisseurs, who are (most of them) such silly fellows as to believe this.

A man sets himself down with colours, and with all the articles of painting; he puts a model before him, and he copies that so neat as to make it a deception. Now, let any man of sense ask himself one question: Is this art? Can it be worthy of admiration to anybody of understanding? Who could not do this? What man, who has eyes and an ordinary share of patience, cannot do this neatly? Is this art, or is it glorious to a nation to produce such contemptible copies? Countrymen, countrymen, do not suffer yourselves to be disgraced!

No man of sense ever supposes that copying from nature is the art of painting; if the art is no more than this, it is no better than any other manual labour: anybody may do it, and the fool often will do it best, as it is a work of no mind. A jockey that is anything of a jockey, will never buy a horse by the colour; and a man who has got any brains will never buy a picture by the colour.

When I tell any truth, it is not for the sake of convincing those who do not know it, but, for the sake of defending those who do.

It is nonsense for noblemen and gentlemen to offer premiums for the encouragement of art, when such pictures as these can be done without premiums. Let them encourage what exists already, and not endeavour to counteract by tricks. Let it no more be said that empires encourage arts, for it is arts that encourage empires. Arts and artists are

spiritual, and laugh at mortal contingencies. Let us teach Buonaparte, and whomsoever else it may concern, that it is not arts that follow and attend upon empire, but empire that attends upon and follows the arts. It is in their power to hinder instruction but not to instruct; just as it is in their power to murder a man, but not to make a man.

I do not pretend to paint better than Raphael or Michael Angelo, or Giulio Romano, or Albert Dürer; but I do pretend to paint finer than Rubens, or Rembrandt, or Correggio, or Titian. I do not pretend to engrave finer than Albert Dürer; but I do pretend to engrave finer than Strange, Woollett, Hall, or Bartolozzi; and all because I understand drawing, which they understood not. Englishmen have been so used to journeymen's undecided bungling, that they cannot bear the firmness of a master's touch. Every line is the line of beauty; it is only fumble and bungle which cannot draw a line. This only is ugliness. That is not a line which doubts and hesitates in the midst of its course.

I know my execution is not like anybody else's. I do not intend it should be so. None but blockheads copy one another. My conception and invention are, on all hands, allowed to be superior; my execution will be found so too. To what is it that gentlemen of the first rank both in genius and fortune have subscribed their names? To my inventions. The executive part they never disputed.

The painters of England are unemployed in public works, while the sculptors have continual and superabundant employment. Our churches and our abbeys are treasures of their producing for ages back, while painting is excluded. Painting, the principal art, has no place among our almost only public works. Yet it is more adapted to solemn ornament than marble can be, as it is capable of being placed in any height, and, indeed, would make a noble finish, placed above the great public monuments in Westminster, St. Paul's, and other cathedrals. To the Society for the Encouragement of Art I address myself with respectful duty, requesting their

consideration of my plan as a great public means of advancing fine art in Protestant communities. Monuments to the dead painters by historical and poetical artists, like Barry and Mortimer (I forbear to name living artists, though equally worthy)—I say, monuments to painters—must make England what Italy is, an envied storehouse of intellectual riches.

It has been said of late years, the English public have no taste for painting. This is a falsehood. The English are as good judges of painting as of poetry, and they prove it in their contempt for great collections of all the rubbish of the Continent, brought here by ignorant picture-dealers. An Englishman may well say 'I am no judge of painting,' when he is shown these smears and daubs, at an immense price, and told that such is the art of painting. I say the English public are true encouragers of real art, while they discourage and look with contempt on false art.

Resentment for personal injuries has had some share in this public address, but love for my art, and zeal for my country, a much greater.

I do not know whether Homer is a liar and that there is no such thing as generous contention. I know that all those with whom I have contended in art have striven, not to excel, but to starve me out by calumny and the arts of trading competition. The manner in which my character has been blasted these thirty years both as an artist and a man may be seen particularly in a Sunday paper called *The Examiner*, published in Beaufort's Buildings (we all know that editors of newspapers trouble their heads very little about art and science, and that they are always paid for what they put in upon these ungracious subjects); and the manner in which I have rooted out the nest of villains will be seen in a poem concerning my three years' herculean labours at Felpham which I shall soon publish. Secret calumny and open professions of friendship are common enough all the world over, but have never been so good an occasion of poetic imagery. When a base man means to be your enemy, he always begins

with being your friend. Flaxman cannot deny that one of the very first monuments he did I gratuitously designed for him ; at the same time he was blasting my character as an artist to Macklin, my employer, as Macklin told me at the time, and posterity will know. Many people are so foolish as to think they can wound Mr. Fuseli over my shoulder : they will find themselves mistaken ; they could not wound even Mr. Barry so.

In a commercial nation, impostors are abroad in all professions ; these are the greatest enemies of genius. In the art of painting these impostors sedulously propagate an opinion that great inventors cannot execute. This opinion is as destructive of the true artist as it is false by all experience. Even Hogarth cannot be either copied or improved. Can Anglus never discern perfection but in a journeyman labourer ?

P.S.—I do not believe that this absurd opinion ever was set on foot till, in my outset into life, it was artfully published, both in whispers and in print, by certain persons whose robberies from me made it necessary to them that I should be hid in a corner. It never was supposed that a copy could be better than an original, or near so good, till, a few years ago, it became the interest of certain knaves. The lavish praise I have received from all quarters for invention and drawing has generally been accompanied by this : ‘He can conceive, but he cannot execute.’ This absurd assertion has done me, and may still do me, the greatest mischief. I call for public protection against these villains. I am, like others, just equal in invention and in execution, as my works show. I, in my own defence, challenge a competition with the finest engravings, and defy the most critical judge to make the comparison honestly : asserting, in my own defence, that this print is the finest that has been done, or is likely to be done, in England, where drawing, the foundation, is condemned, and absurd nonsense about dots and lozenges and clean strokes made to occupy the attention to the neglect

of all real art. . I defy any man to cut cleaner strokes than I do, or rougher, when I please ; and assert, that he who thinks he can engrave or paint either, without being a master of drawing, is a fool. Painting is drawing on canvas, and engraving is drawing on copper, and nothing else. Drawing is execution and nothing else ; and he who draws best must be the best artist. And to this I subscribe my name as a public duty.

WILLIAM BLAKE.



## NOTE.

[IN an early part of the same book from which has been gathered the foregoing *Public Address*, occur three memoranda having reference to the methods by which Blake engraved some of his designs.

These receipts are written immediately under two very curious entries :—‘Tuesday, Jan. 20, 1807, Between two and seven in the evening. Despair.’ And—‘I say I shan’t live five years ; and if I live one it will be a wonder. June 1793.’ The last-quoted entry is in pencil, and pretty evidently made *before* the subjoined.]

*Memorandum.*

To engrave on pewter : Let there be first a drawing made correctly with black-lead pencil ; let nothing be to seek. Then rub it off on the plate, covered with white wax ; or perhaps pass it through press. This will produce certain and determined forms on the plate, and time will not be wasted in seeking them afterwards.

*Memorandum.*

To wood-cut on pewter : Lay a ground on the plate, and smoke it as for etching. Then trace your outlines, and, beginning with the spots of light on each object, with an oval-pointed needle, scrape off the ground, as a direction for your graver. Then proceed to graving, with the ground on the plate ; being as careful as possible not to hurt the ground, because it, being black, will show perfectly what is wanted.

*Memorandum.*

To wood-cut on copper : Lay a ground as for etching ; trace, &c. and, instead of etching the blacks, etch the whites, and bite it in.

## SIBYLLINE LEAVES.

### *On Homer's Poetry.*

EVERY poem must necessarily be a perfect Unity, but why Homer's is peculiarly so I cannot tell : he has told the story of Bellerophon, and omitted the Judgment of Paris, which is not only a part, but a principal part, of Homer's subject. But when a work has unity, it is as much so in a part as in the whole. The torso is as much a unity as the Laocoon. As unity is the cloak of folly, so goodness is the cloak of knavery. Those who will have unity exclusively in Homer come out with a moral like a sting in the tail. Aristotle says characters are either good or bad : now, goodness or badness has nothing to do with character. An apple-tree, a pear-tree, a horse, a lion, are characters ; but a good apple-tree or a bad is an apple-tree still. A horse is not more a lion for being a bad horse—that is its character : its goodness or badness is another consideration.

It is the same with the moral of a whole poem as with the moral goodness of its parts. Unity and morality are secondary considerations, and belong to Philosophy, and not to Poetry—to exception, and not to rule—to accident, and not to substance. The ancients called it eating of the Tree of Good and Evil.

The Classics it is, the Classics, and not Goths or monks, that desolate Europe with wars.

*On Virgil.*

SACRED truth has pronounced that Greece and Rome, as Babylon and Egypt, so far from being parents of Arts and Sciences, as they pretend, were destroyers of all Art. Homer, Virgil, and Ovid, confirm this, and make us reverence the Word of God, the only light of Antiquity that remains unperturbed by war. Virgil, in the *Eneid*, Book VI. line 848, says: 'Let others study Art. Rome has somewhat better to do—namely, War and Dominion.'

Rome and Greece swept art into their maw, and destroyed it. A warlike State never can produce art. It will rob and plunder, and accumulate into one place, and translate, and copy, and buy and sell, and criticise, but not make. Grecian is mathematic form. Mathematic form is eternal in the reasoning memory. Living form is eternal existence. Gothic is living form.

# THE GHOST OF ABEL.

A REVELATION IN THE VISIONS OF JEHOVAH.

*Seen by William Blake.*

To Lord Byron in the Wilderness.—What dost thou here,  
Elijah?

Can a Poet doubt the Visions of Jehovah? Nature has no  
Outline;

But Imagination has. Nature has no Time; but Imagination  
has.

Nature has no Supernatural, and dissolves; Imagination is  
Eternity.

SCENE.—*A rocky Country. EVE fainted over the dead body  
of ABEL which lies near a grave. ADAM kneels by her.  
JEHOVAH stands above.*

JEHOVAH.—Adam!

ADAM.—It is in vain: I will not hear thee more, thou  
Spiritual Voice.

Is this Death?

JEHOVAH.—Adam!

ADAM.—It is in vain; I will not hear thee  
Henceforth. Is this thy Promise that the Woman's Seed  
Should bruise the Serpent's Head? Is this the Serpent?

Ah!

Seven times, O Eve, thou hast fainted over the Dead.

Ah! Ah!

(EVE revives.)

EVE.—Is this the promise of Jehovah? Oh it is all a vain delusion,

This Death and this Life and this Jehovah.

JEHOVAH.—Woman, lift thine eyes.

(A VOICE *is heard coming on.*)

VOICE.—O Earth, cover not thou my blood!

(*Enter the GHOST OF ABEL.*)

EVE.—Thou visionary Phantasm, thou art not the real Abel.

ABEL.—Among the Elohim a Human Victim I wander. I am their House,

Prince of the Air, and our dimensions compass Zenith and Nadir.

Vain is thy Covenant, O Jehovah: I am the Accuser and Avenger

Of Blood; O Earth, cover not thou the blood of Abel.

JEHOVAH.—What vengeance dost thou require?

ABEL.—Life for Life! Life for Life!

JEHOVAH.—He who shall take Cain's life must also die, O Abel;

And who is he? Adam, wilt thou, or Eve, thou, do this?

ADAM.—It is all a vain delusion of the all-creative Imagination.

Eve, come away, and let us not believe these vain delusions.

Abel is dead, and Cain slew him; We shall also die a death,

And then—what then? be as poor Abel, a Thought; or as This? Oh what shall I call thee, Form Divine, Father of Mercies,

That appearest to my Spiritual Vision? Eve, seest thou also?

EVE.—I see him plainly with my mind's eye: I see also Abel living!

Tho' terribly afflicted, as we also are: yet Jehovah sees him

Alive and not dead ; were it not better to believe Vision  
 With all our might and strength, tho' we are fallen and lost ?  
 ADAM.—Eve, thou hast spoken truly ; let us kneel before  
 his feet.

*(They kneel before JEHOVAH.)*

ABEL.—Are these the sacrifices of Eternity, O Jehovah ?  
 a broken spirit

And a contrite heart ? O, I cannot forgive ; the Accuser  
 hath

Entered into me as into his house, and I loathe thy  
 Tabernacles.

As thou hast said so is it come to pass : My desire is  
 unto Cain

And he doth rule over me : therefore my soul in fumes of  
 blood

Cries for vengeance : Sacrifice on Sacrifice, Blood on Blood.

JEHOVAH.—Lo, I have given you a Lamb for an atone-  
 ment instead

Of the transgressor, or no Flesh or Spirit could ever live.

ABEL.—Compelled I cry, O Earth, cover not the blood of  
 Abel.

*(ABEL sinks down into the grave, from which arises Satan,  
 armed in glittering scales, with a crown and a spear.)*

SATAN.—I will have human blood, and not the blood of  
 bulls or goats,

And no Atonement, O Jehovah ; the Elohim live on  
 sacrifice

Of men : hence I am god of men ; thou human, O  
 Jehovah.

By the rock and oak of the Druid, creeping mistletoe and  
 thorn,

Cain's city built with human blood, not blood of bulls and  
 goats,

Thou shalt thyself be sacrificed to me thy God on Calvary.

JEHOVAH.—Such is my will (*thunders*) that thou thyself  
 go to Eternal Death.

In self-annihilation, even till Satan self-subdued put off  
Satan

Into the bottomless abyss whose torment arises for ever  
and ever.

*(On each side a Chorus of Angels entering sing the  
following.)*

The Elohim of the Heathen swore vengeance for Sin!

Then thou stood'st

Forth, O Elohim Jehovah, in the midst of the darkness of  
the oath all clothed

In thy covenant of the forgiveness of sins. Death, O  
Holy! is this Brotherhood?

The Elohim saw their oath eternal fire; they rolled  
apart trembling over the

Mercy-Seat, each in his station fixed in the Firmament,  
by Peace, Brotherhood, and Love.

*(The curtain falls.)*

(1822. W. Blake's original stereotype was 1788.)

'On the skirt of a figure, rapid and "vehemently sweep-  
'ing," engraved underneath (recalling that vision of Dion,  
'made memorable by one of Wordsworth's noble poems)  
'are inscribed these words:—"The voice of Abel's Blood."  
'The fierce and strenuous flight of this figure is as the motion  
'of one whose feet are swift to shed blood, and the dim face  
'is full of hunger and sorrowful lust after revenge. The  
'decorations are slight, but not ineffective; wrought merely  
'in black and white. This small prose lyric has a value  
'beyond the value of its occasional beauty and force of form;  
'it is a brief, comprehensible expression of Blake's faith seen  
'from its two leading sides; belief in vision and belief in  
'mercy.'

(From *A Critical Essay on William Blake*, by Algernon  
Charles Swinburne, pp. 295-296, where *The Ghost of Abel*  
was first printed.)

## A VISION OF THE LAST JUDGMENT.

THE Last Judgment is not fable, or allegory, but vision. Fable, or allegory, is a totally distinct and inferior kind of poetry. Vision, or imagination, is a representation of what actually exists, really and unchangeably. Fable, or allegory, is formed by the daughters of Memory.' Imagination is surrounded by the daughters of inspiration, who, in the aggregate, are called Jerusalem. Fable is allegory, but what critics call *the fable* is vision itself. The Hebrew Bible and the Gospel of Jesus are not allegory, but eternal vision, or imagination, of all that exists. Note here that fable, or allegory, is seldom without some vision. *Pilgrim's Progress* is full of it; the Greek poets the same. But allegory and vision ought to be known as two distinct things, and so called for the sake of eternal life. The [ancients produce fable] when they assert that Jupiter usurped the throne of his father, Saturn, and brought on an iron age, and begot on Mnemosyne or Memory the great Muses, which are not inspiration, as the Bible is. Reality was forgot, and the varieties of time and space only remembered, and called reality. The Greeks represent Chronos, or Time, as a very aged man. This is fable, but the real vision of Time is an eternal youth. I have, however, somewhat accommodated my figure of Time to the common opinion; as I myself am also infected with it, and my vision is also infected, and I see Time aged—alas! too much so. Allegories are things that relate to moral virtues.



Moral virtues do not exist : they are allegories and dissimulations. But Time and Space are real beings, a male and a female ; Time is a man, Space is a woman, and her masculine portion is Death. Such is the mighty difference between allegoric fable and spiritual mystery. Let it here be noted that the Greek fables originated in spiritual mystery and real vision, which are lost and clouded in fable and allegory ; while the Hebrew Bible and the Greek Gospel are genuine, preserved by the Saviour's mercy. The nature of my work is visionary, or imaginative ; it is an endeavour to restore what the ancients called the Golden Age.

Plato has made Socrates say that poets and prophets do not know or understand what they write or utter. This is a most pernicious falsehood. If they do not, pray is an inferior kind to be called 'knowing' ? Plato confutes himself.

The Last Judgment is one of these stupendous visions. I have represented it as I saw it. To different people it appears differently, as everything else does.

In eternity one thing never changes into another thing : each identity is eternal. Consequently, Apuleius's Golden Ass, and Ovid's Metamorphoses, and others of the like kind, are fable ; yet they contain vision in a sublime degree, being derived from real vision in more ancient writings. Lot's wife being changed into a pillar of salt alludes to the mortal body being rendered a permanent statue, but not changed or transformed into another identity, while it retains its own individuality. A man can never become ass nor horse ; some are born with shapes of men who are both ; but eternal identity is one thing, and corporeal vegetation is another thing. Changing water into wine by Jesus, and into blood by Moses, relates to vegetable nature also.

The nature of visionary fancy, or imagination, is very little known, and the eternal nature and permanence of its ever-existent images are considered as less permanent than the things of vegetable and generative nature. Yet the oak dies as well as the lettuce ; but its eternal image or individuality

never dies, but renews by its seed. Just so the imaginative image returns by the seed of contemplative thought. The writings of the prophets illustrate these conceptions of the visionary fancy by their various sublime and divine images as seen in the worlds of vision.

The world of imagination is the world of eternity. It is the divine bosom into which we shall all go after the death of the vegetated body. This world of imagination is infinite and eternal, whereas the world of generation, or vegetation, is finite and temporal. There exist in that eternal world the permanent realities of every thing which we see reflected in this vegetable glass of nature.

All things are comprehended in these eternal forms in the divine body of the Saviour, the true vine of eternity . . . who appeared to me as coming to judgment among His saints, and throwing off the temporal, that the eternal might be established. Around him were seen the images of existences according to a certain order, suited to my imaginative eye, as follows :—

Jesus seated between the two pillars, Joachin and Boaz, with the word divine of revelation on His knee, and on each side the four-and-twenty elders sitting in judgment ; the heavens opening around Him by unfolding the clouds around His throne. The old heavens and the old earth are passing away, and the new heavens and the new earth descending : a sea of fire issues from before the throne. Adam and Eve appear first before the judgment-seat, in humiliation ; Abel surrounded by innocents ; and Cain, with the flint in his hand with which he slew his brother, falling with the head downwards. From the cloud on which Eve stands, Satan is seen falling headlong, wound round by the tail of the serpent, whose bulk, nailed to the cross round which he wreathes, is falling into the abyss. Sin is also represented as a female bound in one of the serpent's folds, surrounded by her fiends. Death is chained to the cross, and Time falls together with Death, dragged down by a demon crowned with laurel. Another

demon, with a key, has the charge of Sin, and is dragging her down by the hair. Beside them a figure is seen, scaled with iron scales from head to feet, precipitating himself into the abyss with the sword and balances: he is Og, king of Bashan.

On the right, beneath the cloud on which Abel kneels, is Abraham, with Sarah and Isaac, also with Hagar and Ishmael on the left. Abel kneels on a bloody cloud, descriptive of those Churches before the Flood, that they were filled with blood and fire and vapour of smoke. Even till Abraham's time the vapour and heat were not extinguished. These states exist now. Man passes on, but states remain for ever: he passes through them like a traveller, who may as well suppose that the places he has passed through exist no more, as a man may suppose that the states he has passed through exist no more: everything is eternal.

Beneath Ishmael is Mahomed: and beneath the falling figure of Cain is Moses, casting his tables of stone into the deeps. It ought to be understood that the persons, Moses and Abraham, are not here meant, but the states signified by those names; the individuals being representatives, or visions, of those states, as they were revealed to mortal man in the series of divine revelations, as they are written in the Bible. These various states I have seen in my imagination. When distant, they appear as one man; but, as you approach, they appear multitudes of nations. Abraham hovers above his posterity, which appear as multitudes of children ascending from the earth, surrounded by stars, as it was said: 'As the stars of heaven for multitude.' Jacob and his twelve sons hover beneath the feet of Abraham, and receive their children from the earth. I have seen, when at a distance, multitudes of men in harmony appear like a single infant, sometimes in the arms of a female. This represented the Church.

But to proceed with the description of those on the left hand. Beneath the cloud on which Moses kneels are two figures, a male and a female, chained together by the feet.

They represent those who perished by the Flood. Beneath them a multitude of their associates are seen falling headlong. By the side of them is a mighty fiend with a book in his hand, which is shut : he represents the person named in Isaiah xxii. c. and 20 v., Eliakim, the son of Hilkiyah. He drags Satan down headlong. He is crowned with oak. By the side of the scaled figure, representing Og, king of Bashan, is a figure with a basket, emptying out the varieties of riches and worldly honours. He is Araunah, the Jebusite, master of the threshing-floor. Above him are two figures elevated on a cloud, representing the Pharisees, who plead their own righteousness before the throne : they are weighed down by two fiends. Beneath the man with the basket are three fiery fiends, with grey beards, and scourges of fire : they represent cruel laws. They scourge a group of figures down into the deeps. Beneath them are various figures in attitudes of contention, representing various states of misery, which, alas ! every one on earth is liable to enter into, and against which we should all watch. The ladies will be pleased to see that I have represented the Furies by three men, and not by three women. It is not because I think the ancients wrong ; but they will be pleased to remember that mine is vision, and not fable. The spectator may suppose them clergymen in the pulpit, scourging sin, instead of forgiving it.

The earth beneath these falling groups of figures is rocky and burning, and seems as if convulsed by earthquakes. A great city, on fire, is seen in the distance. The armies (?) are fleeing upon the mountains. On the foreground Hell is opened, and many figures are descending into it down stone steps, and beside a gate beneath a rock, where Sin and Death are to be closed eternally by that fiend who carries the key in one hand, and drags them down with the other. On the rock, and above the gate, a fiend with wings urges the wicked onward with fiery darts. He is Hazael, the Syrian, who drives abroad all those who rebel against their Saviour.

Beneath the steps is Babylon, represented by a king crowned, grasping his sword and his sceptre. He is just awakened out of his grave. Around him are other kingdoms arising to judgment, represented in this picture by single personages, according to the descriptions in the Prophets. The figure dragging up a woman by her hair represents the Inquisition, as do those contending on the sides of the pit; and, in particular, the man strangling a woman represents a cruel Church.

Two persons, one in purple, the other in scarlet, are descending down the steps into the pit. These are Caiaphas and Pilate; two states where all those reside who calumniate and murder under pretence of holiness and justice. Caiaphas has a blue flame, like a mitre, on his head: Pilate has bloody hands, that can never be cleansed. The females behind them represent the females belonging to such states, who are under perpetual terrors and vain dreams, plots, and secret deceit. Those figures that descend into the flames before Caiaphas and Pilate are Judas and those of his class. Achitophel is also here, with the cord in his hand.

Between the figures of Adam and Eve appears a fiery gulph descending from the sea of fire before the throne. In this cataract four angels descend headlong with four trumpets to awake the dead. Beneath these is the seat of the harlot, named Mystery in the Revelations. She is seized by two beings, each with three heads: they represent vegetative existence. As it is written in Revelations, they strip her naked, and burn her with fire. It represents the eternal consumption of vegetable life and death, with its lusts. The wreathed torches in their hands represent eternal fire, which is the fire of generation or vegetation; it is an eternal consummation. Those who are blessed with imaginative vision see this eternal female, and tremble at what others fear not; while they despise and laugh at what others fear. Beneath her feet is a flaming cavern, in which are seen her kings, and councillors, and warriors, descending in flames, lamenting, and

looking upon her in astonishment and terror, and Hell is opened beneath her seat ; on the left hand, the great Red Dragon with seven heads and ten horns. He has a book of accusations, lying on the rock, open before him. He is bound in chains by two strong demons : they are Gog and Magog, who have been compelled to subdue their master (Ezekiel xxxviii. c. 8 v.) with their hammer and tongs, about to new-create the seven-headed kingdoms. The graves beneath are opened, and the dead awake and obey the call of the trumpet : those on the right hand awake in joy, those on the left in horror. Beneath the Dragon's cavern a skeleton begins to animate, starting into life at the trumpet's sound, while the wicked contend with each other on the brink of perdition. On the right, a youthful couple are awaked by their children ; an aged patriarch is awaked by his aged wife : he is Albion, our ancestor, patriarch of the Atlantic Continent, whose history preceded that of the Hebrews, and in whose sleep, or chaos, creation began. The good woman is Britannica, the wife of Albion. Jerusalem is their daughter. Little infants creep out of the flowery mould into the green fields of the blessed, who, in various joyful companies, embrace and ascend to meet eternity.

The persons who ascend to meet the Lord, coming in the clouds with power and great glory, are representations of those states described in the Bible under the names of the Fathers before and after the Flood. Noah is seen in the midst of these, canopied by a rainbow ; on his right hand Shem, and on his left Japhet. These three persons represent Poetry, Painting, and Music, the three powers in man of conversing with Paradise which the Flood did not sweep away. Above Noah is the Church Universal, represented by a woman surrounded by infants. There is such a state in eternity : it is composed of the innocent civilised heathen and the uncivilised savage, who, having not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law. This state appears like a female crowned with stars, driven into the wilderness : she has the

moon under her feet. The aged figure with wings, having a writing tablet, and taking account of the numbers who arise, is that Angel of the Divine Presence mentioned in Exodus xiv. c. 19 v.

Around Noah, and beneath him, are various figures risen into the air. Among these are three females, representing those who are not of the dead, but of those found alive at the Last Judgment. They appear to be innocently gay and thoughtless, not being among the condemned, because ignorant of crime in the midst of a corrupted age. The Virgin Mary was of this class. A mother meets her numerous family in the arms of their father: these are representations of the Greek learned and wise, as also of those of other nations, such as Egypt and Babylon, in which were multitudes who shall meet the Lord coming in the clouds.

The children of Abraham, or Hebrew Church, are represented as a stream of figures, on which are seen stars, somewhat like the Milky Way. They ascend from the earth, where figures kneel, embracing above the graves, and represent religion, or civilised life, such as it is in the Christian Church, which is the offspring of the Hebrew. Just above the graves, and above the spot where the infants creep out of the ground (?) stand two—a man and woman: these are the primitive Christians. The two figures in purifying flames, by the side of the Dragon's cavern, represent the latter state of the Church, when on the verge of perdition, yet protected by a flaming sword. Multitudes are seen ascending from the green fields of the blessed, in which a Gothic church is representative of true art (called 'Gothic' in all ages, by those who follow the fashion, as that is called which is without shape or fashion). By the right hand of Noah, a woman with children represents the state called Laban the Syrian: it is the remains of civilisation in the state from whence Adam was taken. Also, on the right hand of Noah, a female descends to meet her lover or husband, representative of that love called friendship, which looks for no other heaven than

the beloved, and in him sees all reflected as in a glass of eternal diamond.

On the right hand of these rise the diffident and humble, and on their left a solitary woman with her infant. These are caught up by three aged men, who appear as suddenly emerging from the blue sky for their help. These three aged men represent divine providence, as opposed to and distinct from divine vengeance, represented by three aged men, on the side of the picture among the wicked, with scourges of fire.

If the spectator could enter into these images in his imagination, approaching them on the fiery chariot of his contemplative thought; if he could enter into Noah's rainbow, could make a friend and companion of one of these images of wonder, which always entreat him to leave mortal things (as he must know), then would he arise from the grave, then would he meet the Lord in the air, and then he would be happy. General knowledge is remote knowledge: it is in particulars that wisdom consists, and happiness too. Both in art and in life general masses are as much art as a pasteboard man is human. Every man has eyes, nose, and mouth; this every idiot knows; but he who enters into and discriminates most minutely the manners and intentions, the characters in all their branches, is the alone wise or sensible man; and on this discrimination all art is founded. I entreat, then, that the spectator will attend to the hands and feet; to the lineaments of the countenance; they are all descriptive of character, and not a line is drawn without intention, and that most discriminate and particular. As poetry admits not a letter that is insignificant, so painting admits not a grain of sand, or a blade of grass insignificant—much less an insignificant blur or mark.

Above the head of Noah is Seth. This state, called Seth, is male and female, in a higher state of happiness than Noah, being nearer the state of innocence. Beneath the feet of Seth two figures represent the two seasons of Spring and Autumn,



while, beneath the feet of Noah, four seasons represent the changed state made by the Flood.

By the side of Seth is Elijah : he comprehends all the prophetic characters. He is seen on his fiery chariot, bowing before the throne of the Saviour. In like manner the figures of Seth and his wife comprehend the Fathers before the Flood, and their generations : when seen remote, they appear as one man. A little below Seth, on his right, are two figures, a male and a female, with numerous children. These represent those who were not in the line of the Church, and yet were saved from among the antediluvians who perished. Between Seth and these, a female figure represents the solitary state of those who, previous to the Flood, walked with God.

All these rise towards the opening cloud before the throne, led onward by triumphant groups of infants. Between Seth and Elijah three female figures, crowned with garlands, represent Learning and Science, which accompanied Adam out of Eden.

The cloud that opens, rolling apart from before the throne, and before the new heaven and the new earth, is composed of various groups of figures, particularly the four living creatures mentioned in Revelations as surrounding the throne. These I suppose to have the chief agency in removing the old heaven and the old earth, to make way for the new heaven and the new earth, to descend from the throne of God and of the Lamb. That living creature on the left of the throne gives to the seven Angels the seven vials of the wrath of God, with which they, hovering over the deeps beneath, pour out upon the wicked their plagues. The other living creatures are descending with a shout, and with the sound of the trumpet, and directing the combats in the upper elements. In the two corners of the picture : on the left hand, Apollyon is foiled before the sword of Michael ; and, on the right, the two witnesses are subduing their enemies.

On the cloud are opened the books of remembrance of life and of death : before that of life, on the right, some figures

bow in lamentation ; before that of death, on the left, the Pharisees are pleading their own righteousness. The one shines with beams of light, the other utters lightnings and tempests.

A Last Judgment is necessary because fools flourish. Nations flourish under wise rulers, and are depressed under foolish rulers ; it is the same with individuals as with nations. Works of art can only be produced in perfection where the man is either in affluence or is above the care of it. Poverty is the fool's rod, which at last is turned on his own back. That is a Last Judgment, when men of real art govern, and pretenders fall. Some people, and not a few artists, have asserted that the painter of this picture would not have done so well if he had been properly encouraged. Let those who think so reflect on the state of nations under poverty, and their incapability of art. Though art is above either, the argument is better for affluence than poverty ; and, though he would not have been a greater artist, yet he would have produced greater works of art, in proportion to his means. A Last Judgment is not for the purpose of making bad men better, but for the purpose of hindering them from oppressing the good.

Around the throne, heaven is opened and the nature of eternal things displayed, all springing from the Divine Humanity. All beams from Him : He is the bread and the wine ; He is the water of life. Accordingly, on each side of the opening heaven appears an Apostle : that on the right represents Baptism ; that on the left represents the Lord's Supper.

All life consists of these two : throwing off error and knaves from our company continually, and receiving truth or wise men into our company continually. He who is out of the Church and opposes it is no less an agent of religion than he who is in it : to be an error, and to be cast out, is a part of God's design. No man can embrace true art till he has explored and cast out false art (such is the nature of mortal

things) ; or he will be himself cast out by those who have already embraced true art. Thus, my picture is a history of art and science, the foundation of society, which is humanity itself. What are all the gifts of the Spirit but mental gifts? Whenever any individual rejects error, and embraces truth, a Last Judgment passes upon that individual.

Over the head of the Saviour and Redeemer, the Holy Spirit, like a dove, is surrounded by a blue heaven, in which are the two cherubim that bowed over the ark ; for here the temple is open in heaven, and the ark of the covenant is a dove of peace. The curtains are drawn apart, Christ having rent the veil : the candlestick and the table of shew-bread appear on each side : a glorification of angels with harps surrounds the dove.

The Temple stands on the mount of God. From it flows on each side a river of life, on whose banks grows the Tree of Life, among whose branches temples and pinnacles, tents and pavilions, gardens and groves, display Paradise, with its inhabitants walking up and down, in conversations concerning mental delights. Here they are no longer talking of what is good and evil, or of what is right or wrong, and puzzling themselves in Satan's labyrinth ; but are conversing with eternal realities, as they exist in the human imagination.

We are in a world of generation and death, and this world we must cast off if we would be artists (?) such as Raphael, Michael Angelo, and the ancient sculptors. If we do not cast off this world, we shall be only Venetian painters, who will be cast off and lost from art.

Jesus is surrounded by beams of glory, in which are seen all around Him infants emanating from Him : these represent the eternal births of intellect from the divine humanity. A rainbow surrounds the throne and the glory, in which youthful nuptials receive the infants in their hands. In eternity woman is the emanation of man ; she has no will of her own ; there is no such thing in eternity as a female will.

On the side next Baptism are seen those called in the

Bible Nursing Fathers and Nursing Mothers: they represent Education. On the side next the Lord's Supper, the Holy Family, consisting of Mary, Joseph, John the Baptist, Zacharias, and Elizabeth, receiving the bread and wine, among other spirits of the Just made perfect. Beneath these, a cloud of women and children are taken up, fleeing from the rolling cloud which separates the wicked from the seats of bliss. These represent those who, though willing, were too weak to reject error without the assistance and countenance of those already in the truth: for a man can only reject error by the advice of a friend, or by the immediate inspiration of God. It is for this reason, among many others, that I have put the Lord's Supper on the left hand of the throne, for it appears so at the Last Judgment for a protection.

The painter hopes that his friends, Anytus, Melitus, and Lycon, will perceive that they are not now in ancient Greece; and, though they can use the poison of calumny, the English public will be convinced that such a picture as this could never be painted by a madman, or by one in a state of outrageous manners; as these bad men both print and publish by all the means in their power. The painter begs public protection, and all will be well.

Men are admitted into heaven, not because they have curbed and governed their passions, or have no passions, but because they have cultivated their understandings. The treasures of heaven are not negations of passion, but realities of intellect, from which all the passions emanate, uncurbed in their eternal glory. The fool shall not enter into heaven, let him be ever so holy: holiness is not the price of entrance into heaven. Those who are cast out are all those who, having no passions of their own, because no intellect, have spent their lives in curbing and governing other people's by the various arts of poverty, and cruelty of all kinds. The modern Church crucifies Christ with the head downwards. Woe, woe, woe to you, hypocrites! Even murder, which the Courts of Justice (more merciful than the Church) are

and evil in one another, and eating the tree of knowledge for Satan's gratification.

The Last Judgment is an overwhelming of bad art and science. Mental things are alone real: what is called corporeal nobody knows of; its dwelling-place is a fallacy, and its existence an imposture. Where is the existence out of mind, or thought?—where is it but in the mind of a fool? Some people flatter themselves that there will be no Last Judgment, and that bad art will be adopted and mixed with good art—that error or experiment will make a part of truth; and they boast that it is its foundation. These people flatter themselves; I will not flatter them. Error is created, truth is eternal. Error or creation will be burned up, and then, and not till then, truth or eternity will appear. It is burned up the moment men cease to behold it. I assert, for myself, that I do not behold the outward creation, and that to me it is hindrance and not action. 'What!' it will be questioned, 'when the sun rises, do you not see a round disc of fire, somewhat like a guinea?' Oh! no, no! I see an innumerable company of the heavenly host, crying: 'Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty!' I question not my corporeal eye, any more than I would question a window concerning a sight. I look through it, and not with it.

The Last Judgment [will be] when all those are cast away who trouble religion with questioning concerning good and evil, or eating of the tree of those knowledges or reasonings which hinder the vision of God, turning all into a consuming fire. When imagination, art, and science, and all intellectual gifts, all the gifts of the Holy Ghost, are looked upon as of no use, and only contention remains to man; then the Last Judgment begins, and its vision is seen by the eye of every one according to the situation he holds.

ENGRAVED DESIGNS BY BLAKE.

THE BOOK OF JOB.

TWENTY-ONE PHOTO-INTAGLIOS FROM THE ORIGINALS.



## ENGRAVED DESIGNS BY BLAKE.

THE aid of the photo-intaglio process has been called in to give the whole *Job* series as a thorough and important example of Blake's style. These photo-intaglios are, of course, line for line, and minutest touch for touch, the counterparts of their originals. They are smaller, but on the whole they may be safely put forward as giving a very sufficient idea of these, quite complete, indeed, in many of the most essential respects; and considering that the original publication is a rare and high-priced book, its reproduction here is a very valuable addition to our table of contents.

Quite as valuable, though still in another way not quite perfect, are the original plates of the *Songs* also given. These were recovered by Mr. Gilchrist, being the only remnant of the series still in existence on copper; the rest having, it is believed, been stolen after Blake's death, and sold for old metal. They are, therefore, as absolutely the *originals* as those appearing in the copies printed by Blake; and the reason why they must still be pronounced imperfect is that they were intended as a mere preparation for colouring by hand, as has been explained in the *Life*; while, being here necessarily given without the colour, they cannot be said to embody Blake's intention in producing them. Much which may here seem unaccountably rugged and incomplete is softened by the sweet, liquid, rainbow tints of the coloured copies into a mysterious brilliancy which could never have been obtained over a first printing of a neater or more exact kind; body colour as well as transparent colour being used in the finishing. However, there will be no doubt among those who love Blake's works as to the advisability of including them here even in the rough; and indeed, to any observer of poetic feeling, it is but the first glance at them which can prove really disappointing. Abundant



beauty remains, even without the colour, in the wealth of lovely ever-varying lines, and plentiful overgrowth from the very heart of the painter, springing and clinging all round the beautiful verses. No littleness here because the scale of work is a small one. Almost any one of these pages might be painted, writing and all, on a space twenty feet high, and leave nothing to be desired as a grand decorative work.

On comparing these Plates with the fac-similies of designs belonging to the same class of Blake's works which are contained in the first volume, it will be at once apparent that the latter are generally extremely successful as reproductions of his style. His work of other kinds, more dependent on engraving in lines, was far more difficult to deal with by the process adopted ; but everywhere the aim has been towards the utmost fidelity, whether the fac-simile was on the exact scale of the original or not.

In concluding the last of the brief prefatory notes to the various sections of this second volume, the writer of them believes he may trust not only to have expressed his own views on the matters to which they relate, but that these are also in harmony with the intentions and fully-matured plans of his friend the author of the *Life*. He had had many conversations with Mr. Gilchrist regarding the completion of this cherished work ; and must have undertaken this slight supplementary task with a still heavier heart, had he not been sure that he agreed with the author of the work in all points concerning its subject, and that there was no danger of any opinion being expressed in the few closing passages, which *he* would unwillingly have endorsed. It may be said on this last page that, at least, neither love of Blake in its author, nor love of its author in those on whom the issuing of his work devolved, has been wanting to make it a true memorial of both.

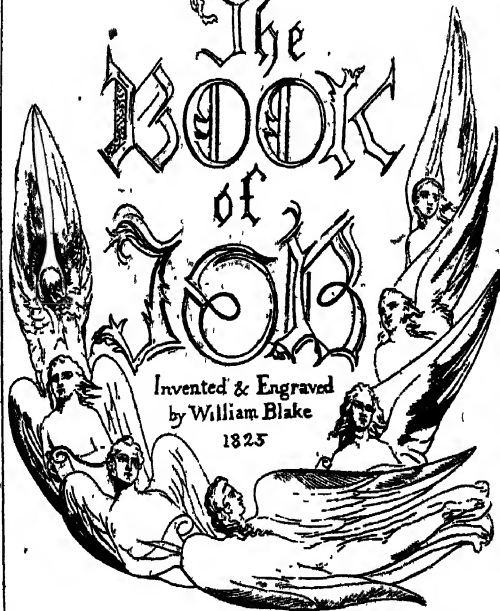
[D. G. R.]

וְכָל הַמַּעֲשִׂים אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה

ILLUSTRATIONS of

The  
BOOK  
of  
JOBS

Invented & Engraved  
by William Blake  
1825



London. Published as the Act directs March 8: 1825 by William Blake N<sup>o</sup> 3 Fountain Court, Strand







Our Father which art in Heaven

hallowed be thy Name



Thus did Job continually

There was a Man in the  
Land of Uz whose Name  
was Job & that Man  
was perfect & upright

The Letter Killeth  
The Spirit giveth Life  
It is Spiritually Discerned

& one that feared God  
& eschewed Evil & there  
was born unto him Seven  
Sons & Three Daughters

W Blake inv & sculp

London. Published as the Act directs March 2 1828, by Will Blake 113 Fountain Court Strand.

Proof









The Fire of God is

And the Lord said unto Satan Behold All that he hath is in thy Power

fallen from Heaven



Thy Sons & thy Daughters were eating & drinking Wine in their  
eldest Brothers house & behold there came a great wind from the Wildernes  
& smote upon the four faces of the house & it fell upon the young Men & they are Dead

W Blake inven. & sculp



4

And there came a Messenger unto Job & said the Oxen were plowing & the Sabeans came down, & they have slain the Young Men with the Sword

Going to lie in the Earth

Walking up & down in it



And I only am escaped alone to tell thee

While he was yet speaking  
there came also another & said

The fire of God is fallen from heaven & hath burned up the flocks & the  
Young Men & consumed them, & I only am escaped alone to tell thee

W. Blake invent & sculp

London. Published as the Act directs March 2. 1825 by Wm. Blake N<sup>o</sup>. 3. Fountain Court St. Strand

Proof





London. Published as the Act directed March 8 1825 by Will<sup>m</sup> Blake N<sup>o</sup> 9 Fountain Court Strand

Proof



Naked came I out of my  
The Lord gave & the Lord hath taken away

mothers womb & Naked shall I return thither  
Blessed be the Name of the Lord



And smote Job with sore Boils  
from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head

W Blake inv & sc

London: as Act directed Published March 8 1825 by William Blake N° 3 Fountain Court Strand

Proof





7  
What! shall we receive Good  
at the hand of God & shall we not also  
receive Evil



And when they lifted up their eyes afar off & knew him not  
they lifted up their voice & wept. & they rent every Man his  
mantle & sprinkled dust upon their heads towards heaven

Ye have heard of the Patience of Job and have seen the end of the Lord.

W. Blake inven. & sculp.

London: Published as the Act directs March 8 1825 by William Blake No 7 Fountain Court Strand

Proof



Lo let that night be solitary  
& let no joyful voice come therein



Let the Day perish wherein I was Born

And they sat down with him upon the ground seven days & seven  
nights & none spake a word unto him for they saw that his grief  
was very great



London. Published as the Act directs March 8 1825 by Will. Blake N<sup>o</sup> 3 Fountain Court Strand

27005



Shall mortal Man be more Just than God? Shall a Man be more Pure than

his Maker? Behold he putteth no trust

in his Saints & his Angels he chargeth with folly



Then a Spirit pass'd before my face  
the hair of my flesh stood up

W. Blake invent. & sculp.



But he knoweth the way that I take  
 when he hath tried me I shall come forth like gold  
 Have pity upon me 'Have pity upon me 'O ye my friends  
 for the hand of God hath touched me  
 Though he slay me yet will I trust in him



### The Just Upright Man is laughed to scorn

Man that is born of a Woman is of few days & full of trouble  
 he cometh up like a flower & is cut down he fleeth also as a shadow  
 & continueth not And dost thou open thine eyes upon such a one  
 & bringest me into judgment with thee

W. Blake inv. sculp.





11  
My bones are pierced in me in the  
right season & my sinews  
take no rest

The triumphing of the wicked  
is short, the joy of the hypocrite is  
but for a moment

Satan himself is transformed into an Angel of Light & his Ministers into Ministers of Righteousness

My skin is black upon me  
& my bones are burned  
with heat



With Dreams upon my bed thou scarest me & affrightest me  
with Visions

Why do you persecute me as God & are not satisfied with my flesh. Oh that my words  
were printed in a Book that they were graven with an iron pen & lead in the rock forever  
For I know that my Redeemer liveth & that he shall stand in the latter days upon  
the Earth & after my skin destroy thou this body yet in my flesh shall I see God  
whom I shall see for Myself and mine eyes shall behold & not Another tho consumed be  
Who opposeth & exalteth himself above all that is called God or is Worshipped

W Blake invenit & sculp

London. Published as the Act directs March 8. 1825 by Will Blake N<sup>o</sup> 3 Fountain Court Strand

Proof



For Court speaketh once yea twice  
& Man perceiveth not  
In a Dream in a Vision of the Night  
in deep Slumberings upon the bed  
Thus he openeth the ears of Men & sealeth their instruction

For his eyes are upon  
the ways of Man & he observeth  
all his goings

That he may withdraw Man from his sin & hide his face  
If there be with him an Interpreter One among a thousand  
& saith Deliver him from going downe the pit  
then hee gracious unto him  
I have found a Raison



I am Young & ye are very Old wherefore I was afraid  
Lo all these things worketh God oftentimes with Man to bring  
hisk his Soul from the pit to be enlightened  
with the light of the living

Look upon the heavens & behold the clouds  
which are higher  
than thou

Ill thou sinnest what  
doest thou against him as if thou be  
righteous what givest thou unto him

W. Blake inventit & sculpsit

London: Published as the Act directs March 3 1825 by Wm. Blake No 7 Fountain Court Strand

Proof



Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge

13



Then the Lord answered Job out of the Whirlwind

Who maketh the Clouds his Chariot & walketh on the Wings of the Wind  
Hath the Rain

the Drops of the Dew

a Father & two hath begotten

W Blake invnt & sculp

London Published as the Act directs March 2. 1823 by William Blake N<sup>o</sup> 3 Fountain Court Strand

Proof





London. Published as the Act directs March 6. 1825 by Will. Blake N<sup>o</sup> 3 Fountain Court Street.

Proof





Can any understand the spreadings of the Clouds  
the noise of his Tabernacle

15

Also by watering he wearieth the duck cloud  
He scattereth the bright cloud also it is turned about by his counsels



Of Behemoth he saith. He is the chief of the ways of God  
Of Leviathan he saith, He is King over all the Children of Pride

Behold now Behemoth which I made with thee

W/Blake invenit & sculpt

Engr. Published as the Act directs March 8 1825 by Will Blake 113 Fountain Court Strand

Proof



Hell is naked before him, & Destruction has no covering

16

Cast them first out into Wrath to perfection  
 The Avenger of our Brethren is Cast down  
 which is the first of a God day 2. nega  
 Cast down by searching find out God



It is higher than Heaven what canst thou do  
 It is deeper than Hell what canst thou know  
 The Prince of this World shall be cast out

Even the Devils are

Thou hast fulfilled the Judgment of the Wicked  
 Subject to Us thro thy Name Jesus said unto them I saw Satan as lightning fall from Heaven

God hath chosen the foolish things of the World to confound the wise  
 And God hath chosen the weak things of the World to confound the things that are mighty

W. Blake inv & sculp

London, Published as the Act directs March 8 1825 by William Blake N° 8 Fountain Court Strand

Print



He bringeth down to the Grave & bringeth up  
 we shall be like him for we shall see him as fields  
 we know that when he shall appear we shall see him as fields  
 when I behold the Son of Man that thou vighest him  
 the work of thy hands the Moon & Stars which thou hast ordained them I say what is he that thou art mindful of him



I have heard thee with the hearing of the Ear but now my Eye seeth thee

He that hath seen the Father also I & my Father are One

At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father & you in me & I in you If ye loved me ye would rejoice because I said I go unto the Father

WBlake

UNV & SCOTT

London Published as the Act directs March 8 1825 by William Blake N<sup>o</sup> 3 Fountain Court Strand

Proof



Also the Lord accepted Job

18



And my Servant Job shall pray for you

And the Lord turned the captivity of Job when he prayed for his Friends

Job 1:1-22  
The Lord said to Satan  
Whence comest thou? Satan  
answered the Lord, saying, I  
came from journeying to and  
fro on the earth, and now I  
am going to visit thee, for thou  
hast said, I will not put my hand  
above the Lord, neither will I  
curse him: for thou hast said,  
The Lord is all that I have, and  
I have not hid aught from him:  
therefore shall the Lord turn  
the captivity of Job, when he  
shall pray for his friends.

W. Blake inv.  
sculp.

London: Published as the Act directs March 8 1825 by Will Blake 113 Fountain Court Strand

Proof





The Lord maketh Poor & maketh Rich

He bringeth Low & Lifteth Up

who provideth for the  
Ravens Food  
Which have eyes they see unto God.



Every one also gave him a piece of Money

Which redeemed us in our low estate  
For his Mercy endureth forever



How precious are thy thoughts  
unto me O God  
how great is the sum of them



There were not found Women fair as the Daughters of Job  
in all the Land & their Father gave them Inheritance  
among their Brethren

If I ascend up into Heaven thou art there  
If I make my bed in Hell behold Thou  
art there



Great & Marvellous are thy Works  
Lord God Almighty

Just & True are thy Ways  
O thou King of Saints



So the Lord blessed the latter end of Job  
more than the beginning

After this Job lived  
an hundred & forty years  
& saw his Sons & his  
Sons Sons



even four Generations  
So Job died  
being old  
& full of days



In burnt Offerings for Sin  
thou hast had no Pleasure

W Blake inv & sculp



DESCRIPTIVE CATALOGUE

BY

WILLIAM MICHAEL ROSSETTI.





[THE ensuing Descriptive Catalogue—a humble tribute to the soaring genius of the author of *the* 'Descriptive Catalogue'—is a complete list, as far as it was found practicable to compile one, of all Blake's original works. It was drawn up for the first edition of this book, 1863: it has now been carried on up to the present date, though with less particularity of research. This Catalogue takes no count of engravings; though it does include the works issued as separate designs in Blake's peculiar method of colour-printing. The term 'colour-printed' indicates these works; enough has been said on this curious question in other parts of the book to absolve me from discussing it here.

The Catalogue was compiled by me, in the very great majority of instances, from immediate personal inspection of the works referred to; to the owners of which, uniformly courteous and accommodating to the utmost, my thanks are most sincerely tendered. In other instances, I have been indebted to Mr. Gilchrist's notes, or to other sources of information. The works which have not been thus seen, and some which, from one circumstance or another, have been seen hurriedly or imperfectly, are, as an unavoidable consequence, referred to in less detail than their relative importance might be found to deserve. The interest attaching to the great collection of Blake's works formed by his almost solitary purchaser, Mr. Butts, has induced me to specify which were once his, even in the instances where they have passed out of the family. The like is done with the works belonging to Mr. Linnell.

The larger examples are roughly indicated in the catalogue; the standard of largeness for a water-colour or pencil-drawing being, of course, different from that for a tempera-picture. Something over a foot for the former, and towards two feet for the latter, may be assumed as the average minimum to which the sign of considerable

size is attached ; but this has been roughly, not accurately, and no doubt not always uniformly, estimated.

The reader should also bear in mind that the exact *relative* excellence of the several works cannot be fully expressed work by work. It has already been explained elsewhere that the most complete, solid, and powerful works in colour left by Blake are to be found among his colour-printed designs. His water-colours are all, comparatively speaking, washy and slight : but some have a general character of strength, brilliancy, &c. of execution ; and these may be spoken of below, with the needful implied reservation, as strong and brilliant.

Some catalogue on the plan of the ensuing is peculiarly necessary in the case of Blake. His life consisted in imaginative insight, and in the embodiment of that insight in the form of art. The list of his paintings and designs is therefore a most important part of his life. I am in hopes that the extraordinary amount of original thought and invention which belongs to these works will be, to some extent, appreciable even through so imperfect a medium as that of an annotated Catalogue, and will render this somewhat less tedious to look through than would be the case with regard to most—or indeed to almost all—other artists.

I may add that ten of the subjects specified in this Catalogue have been etched (or lithographed) by Mr. William Bell Scott in his publication named *William Blake* (Chatto and Windus, 1878). They are—*The Ascent of the Just* ; the *Sea and Rainbow* (which Mr. Scott identifies with the *Deluge* ; the *Semi-human Elephants* ; *The Nativity* ; *St. Matthew* ; *The Babylonian Woman on the Seven-headed Beast* ; *The Creation of Eve* ; *Adam and Eve watched by Satan* ; the *Eating of the Forbidden Fruit* ; *Adam's Vision of the Crucifixion*.]

# ANNOTATED LISTS

OF

BLAKE'S PAINTINGS, DRAWINGS, AND ENGRAVINGS.

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## LIST No. I.

### WORKS IN COLOUR.

\* Means considerable size. The works not otherwise defined are known or assumed to be water-colours. To designs which have been engraved the dates of the engravings or books are given, unless anything is known to the contrary.

#### SECTION A.—DATED WORKS.

ARRANGED IN ORDER OF DATE.

1. 1778-9.—The Penance of Jane Shore in St. Paul's Church. *Varnished Water-colour.* See p. 31, Vol. I., and Blake's *Descriptive Catalogue*, p. 163, Vol. II.
2. Circa 1779.—King Edward and Queen Eleanor. See p. 31, Vol. I.
3. 1780.—The Death of Earl Godwin. See p. 35, Vol. I.
4. 1784.—War unchained by an Angel—Fire, Pestilence, and Famine following. [Butts.] See p. 54, Vol. I.
5. 1784.—A Breach in a City—the Morning after a Battle. See p. 54, Vol. I.

The colour slight, but the tone strong and full, with the darkness of earliest dawn. Women lie mourning over the heaped dead : a widow bemoaning her knight, and a woman and aged man proceeding upon their search, are the chief figures, the subject being prolonged far into the background. An eagle has settled to the left, watching for the departure of the mourners, impatient till his banquet begins. Able and impressive. (This was called in the Catalogue of the Bicknell sale, 1863, 'The Plague' :

decidedly a mistake.) Mr. Alfred Aspland possesses another version of the same subject, with a date which may perhaps be 1780.

6. 1785.—The Bard, from Gray. See p. 56, Vol. I., p. 152, Vol. II.

7. 1785.—Joseph's Brethren bowing before him. See p. 57, Vol. I.

The colour does not play any very considerable part in this and the two companion designs. The brothers form a grand, sheaf-like group.

8. 1785.—Joseph ordering Simeon to be bound. See preceding No., and p. 57. Vol. I.

A sketch water-colour of the same composition is also extant.

9. 1785.—Joseph making himself known to his Brethren.

Remarkable for its bursting spontaneity of emotion. The figure of Joseph is especially pure and impulsive. (Nos. 7, 8, and 9, appeared in the International Exhibition, 1862.)

10. 1790.—The Flight into Egypt. [Butts.] *Tempera*.

An Angel accompanies Joseph, and two others follow the Virgin and Child, while the air around them is peopled with Cherubs. Pretty enough: surface greatly cracked, but now partially renewed.

11. 1790.—Christ blessing the little Children. [Butts.] *Tempera*.

Fine. The surface cracked, but repaired.

12. 1790.—'Death and Hell teem with Life.'

Carefully finished: engraved in the 'Marriage of Heaven and Hell,' leaf 10.

13. 1793.—A young man gazing remorsefully upon another bound upon a rock. [Linnell.]

Similar to the head-piece of the 'America,' but without the female figure, and a good deal larger. Darkish tone of colouring.

14. 1793.—Design for the Frontispiece to the 'Daughters of Albion.' [Linnell.]

Excellent in colour.

15. 1793 or 1795.—\*Nebuchadnezzar. [Butts.] *Colour-printed*.

Crawling on all fours in his shaggy insanity. The tawny beard trails across the left hand: the nails are *literally* 'like birds' claws,' and the flesh tints very red and 'beefy.' The glaring eyes, too, have almost lost their human character. The background represents a thick jungle. A fine, wild conception. There are other impressions of this print, which (as in similar cases afterwards named) differ in the details and merit of the colour and handling. The figure is almost identical with the one engraved at p. 88, Vol. I.

16. 1794.—Design for the Title Page to the 'Europe.' [Linnell.]

Includes a human figure not given in the engraving. The serpent, as usual, is admirable.

17. 1794.—Design from the 'Europe' of a Man at a Forge, with a Woman and a Youth. [Linnell.]  
Carefully coloured.

18. 1794.—A Young Man rescuing a Woman and Girl from a Conflagration.

Identical, or nearly so, with the tail-piece to the 'Europe.'  
The colour rather harsh.

19. 1795.—The Lazar House, from Milton; called also 'The House of Death,' by Blake. [Butts.] *Colour-printed.*

Very powerful and awful. Three of the diseased are writhing upon a mat on the ground, two others are behind. Death and Despair are also present, as in Milton. The former, a vast figure, with closed eyes, a prodigious beard like tongues of flame, and arrow-like fire darting around him, appears at the summit of the group, with outstretched arms and scroll, or, perhaps, winding-sheet. The latter is a livid-green man, with a long bolt or goad in his hand, eyeing his victims with stony scrutiny. I have seen a duplicate of this great work, paler in tint.

20. 1795.—Elohim creating Adam. [Butts.] *Colour-printed.*

The Creator is an amazingly grand figure, worthy of a primeval imagination or intuition. He is struggling, as it were, above Adam, who lies distended on the ground, a serpent twined around one leg. The colour has a terrible power in it; and the entire design is truly a mighty one—perhaps on the whole the greatest monument extant of Blake's genius. It looks as if he had *literally* seen (as he said) 'those wonderful originals called in the sacred Scriptures the Cherubim, which were sculptured and painted on walls of temples, towers, cities, palaces,' and as if this were a reproduction of some such stupendous spectacle.

21. 1795.—Lamech and his two Wives. [Butts.] *Colour-printed.*

Lamech looks with horrid remorse upon the young man he has slain: his wives, beautifully grouped, cling together in dismay. Extra Blakeian in character and drawing. There is a great effect of dark sky and hills, their edges dimly defined in glimmering light.

22. 1795.—The Good and Evil Angels struggling for possession of a Child. [Butts.] *Colour-printed.*

The Good Angel holds the Child—the Evil one, enveloped in flames, seeks to seize it; his eyes are mere sightless balls. A strong specimen of Blake's solid colour, and energetic form and action.

23. 1795.—Elijah mounted in the Fiery Chariot. *Colour-printed.*

Elijah lays hold of the rein with his right hand; his left is upon a book placed on his knees. He is draped—but Elisha, who stands before him, with joined hands, lost in a flood of beard, is perfectly naked, and looks as ancient as Elijah. The horses seem compact of fire; fire flows out in place of chariot-wheels; behind Elijah, a sphere of rolling red flame; for sky, a blaze of

yellow. A magnificent work—awful and preterhuman in its impression, even to the length of the Prophets' beards. The colour very solid, and austere luminous. A duplicate of this is somewhat more positive and less excellent in colour. Another duplicate has black, instead of yellow, behind and upon the rays. Given in Vol. I. Chap. XIV.

24. 1795.—Newton. [Butts.] *Colour-printed.*

A sitting naked figure among the rocks, stooping with compasses, wherewith he is measuring on the ground. Remarkably grand in action and manner, and full in the colour of the sky and rocky bank, for the peculiar execution of which see p. 421, Vol. I.

25. 1797.—Young's Night Thoughts.

Blake has taken the folio edition of Young, two volumes, an inlaid copy, and has executed his designs, 537 in number, so as to form a margin round the text. See Vol. I. p. 136.

26. 1799 (?).—The Last Supper. [Butts.] *Tempera.*

The group are reclined at table in the antique mode—a point seldom or never introduced in art. Judas is so absorbed in counting over the thirty pieces of silver covertly in the palm of his hand that he remains deaf to what is being said. The effect of the lights scintillates upon a dark ground. A very interesting and, on the whole, fine picture: probably the one exhibited in the Academy (p. 140—1, Vol. I.).

27. 1799.—Charity. [Butts.] *Tempera.*

Charity is embodied in a female form: there are various other figures in the composition.

28. 1799.—Rachel giving Joseph the Coat of many Colours (?). [Butts.] *Tempera.*

The aged Israel, the still blooming and lovely Rachel, and the naked boy Joseph, form a fine group of Blake's patriarchal style. Golden, but nearly colourless, in tint, with a blue sky. The supposed 'coat of many colours' is only coloured with a blue arabesque pattern.

29. 1799.—The Adoration of the Kings. [Butts.] *Tempera.*

A pretty, sweet picture, with abundance of rich material.

30. 1799.—'The sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose.' (?) [Butts.] *Tempera.*

An old man, a woman, an angel, and six children, under a fruit-tree; the woman is a charming figure. Interesting in conception, if the subject is as surmised.

31. 1799 (?).—St. Matthew. [Butts.] *Tempera.*

Vigorously conceived. The Angel, typically associated with St. Matthew, is showing him a roll, written with blood-red characters of the Hebrew type—the record of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. Matthew starts back amazed at the riches of the grace of God.

32. 1799 (?).—St. Mark. [Butts.] *Tempera* (?).
33. 1799.—St. Luke. [Butts.] *Tempera*.  
He holds a pen, and is accompanied by the typical bull. Almost destroyed in surface. This picture, being dated, may be presumed to fix the date of the three companion-figures.
34. 1799 (?).—St. John. [Butts.] *Tempera* (?).
35. 1799.—The child Christ taught by the Virgin to read. [Butts.] *Tempera*.  
An inferior specimen.
36. Circa 1799 (?).—‘A spirit vaulting from a cloud  
To turn and wind a fiery Pegasus.’  
SHAKESPEARE.  
*Unfinished*. See p. 158, Vol. II., Blake’s Descriptive Catalogue and No. 79.  
The date is *conjectured*, from the statement (as above) that the work, one of Blake’s first ‘frescoes,’ was painted many years before the date of the Catalogue (1809).
37. 1800.—The Crucifixion—the Soldiers casting lots for the Garments. [Butts.]  
Peculiarly treated—the Crucified Saviour, with the two thieves, being seen from behind, and the ground which lies before the cross appearing beyond. Very poetic, pictorial, and solemn in-darkling effect. The soldiers form the foreground group, and have plenty of character and varied action. See p. 161, Vol. II.
38. Circa 1801.—\*EIGHTEEN HEADS of the Poets. *Tempera, or possibly oil*. See p. 166, Vol. I.  
These heads are nearly life-size, each painted on a separate canvas; the heads themselves almost or quite colourless, with the character of sculptural busts, the accessories mostly coloured, within decorative limits, and illustrative of the author’s genius or works. An interesting series.
- (a) Homer.  
Younger than he is usually represented, and full of life; one of the finest of the set, the colour well harmonised. Bay-wreath. Curiously enough, the illustrative accessories selected are the Mouse and Frog, very cleverly done, indicating no higher achievement in poetry than the *Batrachomyomachia*.
- (b) Euripides, or another of the Greek Tragedians.  
A good head. Oak-wreath. Accessories from classic legend.
- (c) Lucan.  
Accessories—Cæsar, and the Decapitation of Pompey.
- (d) Dante.  
Vivid and grand: wreath and framing of bay, fine in decorative arrangement. Accessory, Ugolino.
- (e) Chaucer.  
Accessories, the Wife of Bath, &c.



(f) Spenser.

Accessories from the Faery Queen.

(g) Tasso.

Accessories, a figure of a woman in prayer, &c.

(h) Shakespeare.

Like the Droeshout portrait, which Blake rated highly (see p. 392, Vol. I.). Accessories, Hamlet and the Ghost.

(i) Sidney.

A good, portrait-like head, in armour.

(j) Camoens.

Undisguisedly one-eyed : good. Accessory, an anchor.

(k) Milton.

More than usually worked up. Wreath of bay and oak intertwined. Accessories, the Serpent holding the apple in his mouth, and a harp against a palm-tree.

(l) Dryden.

Good ; greatly dilapidated at one side. Accessory, Alexander's Feast.

(m) Otway.

An able, thoughtful head. Accessories, the City of Venice, unspeakably unlike it, and the appeal of Belvidera and Jaffier.

(n) Pope.

Wreath, ivy and other leaves. Accessories, Heloise praying, and another female figure not easy to identify ; both agreeable.

(o) Young.

Wreath, bramble and palm. Accessory, a figure which may stand for a Recording Angel.

(p) Cowper.

Still more colourless than usual. Wreath of lily-of-the-valley. Accessories, a dog and a school-boy.

(q) Voltaire.

Young and extremely sprightly. The wreath is distinguished from all the others by the variety and brightness of its floral colours—honeysuckle, convolvulus, pimpernel, &c. ; a rather curious distinction, as one is not at all accustomed to associate the idea of Voltaire with any special vividness of natural beauty. Accessories, the Pucelle d'Orléans, (disappointing,) and some knights.

(r) Hayley.

A pleasing, youngish face.

39. 1802.—Portrait of Mr. Butts, Sen. [Butts.] *Miniature.*

Half-length. An unpretending but by no means unsatisfactory example of miniature-painting. The sitter, with powdered hair and dark eyes, in an artillery uniform, holds a book. See Vol. I. p. 180, showing that this portrait was painted (wholly or partly) without nature.

40. 1802 (?).—\*Adam naming the Beasts. [Butts.] *Tempera*.  
Bust : front face : life-size. See p. 176—7, Vol. I. as to this subject, as frontispiece to Hayley's Ballads.
41. 1802.—\*Eve naming the Birds. [Butts.] *Tempera*.  
Bust : front-face : life-size. The pretty turn of thought evidenced in this as connected with the preceding subject will not be missed.
42. 1802.—Portrait of the Rev. John Johnson. *Miniature*. See p. 171, Vol. I.
43. 1803.—The Riposo (Repose in the flight to Egypt). [Butts.]  
Described in Blake's letter, p. 184, Vol. I. The Riposo, No. 161, does not strictly correspond with the description, nor yet No. 76.
44. 1803.—\*St. Paul preaching in Athens. [Butts.] *Colour-printed*.  
Mentioned on p. 184, Vol. I.
45. 1803.—\*The three Maries, with the Angel at the Sepulchre. [Butts.]  
The Angel is just floating above the ground : the Maries, arrested by the sight, hold together, unknowing what to think. Very fine and mystic-looking.
46. 1803.—\*The Death of the Virgin Mary—(inscribed) 'Then saith He to the disciple, "Behold thy Mother!" And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home.' [Butts.]  
Mary has just yielded up her breath : Angels attend her bed, head and foot. Above her, and within a rainbow composed of angel-heads, stands John. Impressive : the figures standing out almost wholly colourless upon a more than usually high-coloured background.
47. 1803.—\*The Death of St. Joseph—(inscribed) 'Into Thine hand I commend my spirit : Thou hast redeemed me, O Lord God of Truth.' [Butts.]  
The companion design to the preceding, strictly corresponding with it in such details as the rainbow. The group of Joseph tended by Jesus and Mary is a fine one, and the effect of light and colour very vivid : though the general quality of execution aimed at is not in all respects that most suitable to Blake.
48. 1803.—The Sacrifice of Jephthah's Daughter. [Butts.]  
The loveliness and pathos of innocent girlhood could not be more gloriously expressed than in this figure of the fair young creature, perfectly naked and rose-chapleted, kneeling upon a lofty altar, full-fronting the spectator. Swathes of rushes for burning are behind her : at either side her tambourine and lyre. Two maidens stand sorrowfully at each angle of the altar. Jephthah kneels in front, his back turned, his arms wide-spread, invoking the Divine sanction upon the tremendous deed. To right and to left, clouds, here lowering in brown, there blue, droop like heavy folds of curtain. This ranks among Blake's noblest designs.

49. 1803.—'I was naked.' 'Unto Adam and his Wife did the Lord God make coats of skins.' [Butts.]

'The Angel of the Divine Presence' (so phrased by Blake) encircles with downward arms Adam and Eve, both of whom clasp hands of humble gratitude : the Eve is exquisitely modest. Palm-trees over-canopy the group ; an altar burns at each side. Very fine in quality, though the execution, especially in the figures, is not carried far.

50. 1803.—Ruth, the dutiful Daughter-in-law. [Butts.]

Extremely beautiful : the figures of Ruth herself and Naomi, the former clasping the latter round the waist, could not be designed with a more noble and pure simplicity. Orpah turns back. There is a good deal of landscape material in the background, of a rather primitive kind, yet pleasing.

51. \*Circa 1803 (?).—Satan calling up his Legions—Paradise Lost. *Tempera*. See p. 159, Vol. II.

Blake terms this and Nos. 81 and 82 'Experiment Pictures.' All of them, it would seem, were free from oil-vehicle. Date conjectured, as in the case of No. 33. A highly finished and noble work.

52. Circa 1804 (?).—The same. *Tempera*.

Referred to at p. 159, Vol. II. An elaborate, fine, and richly-coloured example, now half-ruined. The Satan, a nude figure standing on a rock, is not like the Fuseli type in such subjects. The composition is full of figures, flames, and rocks.

53. 1804.—\*Thomas Hayley. *Tempera, or possibly oil*.

The son of William Hayley, and pupil of Flaxman. Medallion portrait, life-size.

54. 1804 (?).—Thomas Hayley. *Sepia*.

Carefully finished. Full-faced, finger on chin. Has been bound into a MS. of Cunningham's 'Life of Blake.'

55. 1804.—A Man at an Anvil talking to a Spirit.

Published in the 'Jerusalem.'

56. 1804.—Three personages, one of them crowned, sunk in despondency.

Published in the 'Jerusalem,' p. 51 ; lugubrious in colour. In the water-colour, this very characteristic design has the names 'Vala, Hyle, Skofeld,' written under the figures—Vala being the crowned one. Might the name Skofeld be derived from the soldier Scholfeld, who laid an information against Blake for seditious words ? Given in Vol. I. Chap. XXI.

57. 1804.—The same design as the preceding. [Linnell.]

Of larger size, and without the names. Very good.

58. 1805.—'After these things came Jesus and His disciples into the land of Judæa ; and there he tarried with them, and baptized.'—John iii. 22. [Butts]. *Water-colour with pen outline*.

Evidently treated with a kind of symbolic bearing upon baptism as a part of the Christian scheme ; Christ stands as

baptiser at a font, as it were in a church. There are several other figures. The colour is pale and sweet. The account printed at p. 278 seems to show that more than usual pains were bestowed upon this water-colour.

59. 1805.—Moses striking the rock. [Butts.]

Not very impressive at first sight, yet powerful in expression of the subject in the group of thirsting Israelites, some dozen or less in number. The principal male figure is taking measures for helping an infant first.

60. Circa 1805.—Fire. [Butts.]

Blake, the supreme painter of fire, in this his typical picture of fire, is at his greatest; perhaps it is not in the power of art to transcend this treatment of the subject in its essential features. The water-colour is unusually complete in execution. The conflagration, horrid in glare, horrid in gloom, fills the background; its javelin-like cones surge up amid conical forms of buildings ('Langham Church steeples,' they may be called, as in No. 175). In front, an old man receives from two youths a box and a bundle which they have recovered; two mothers and several children crouch and shudder, overwhelmed; other figures behind are running about, bewildered what to do next.

61. 1805.—\*Plague. [Butts.] *Water-colour with pen outline.*

The admirable design engraved to face p. 55, Vol. I.: slight in colour.

62. 1805.—Pestilence — The Death of the First-born. [Butts.]  
*Water-colour with pen outline.*

A vast scaled demon, green and many-tinted, pours deadly influence from his outstretched arms. The figures rushing together scared, by pale torch-light, to find themselves each bereaved, are powerfully rendered. In the centre, between the demon's legs, is seen a small Israelitish house, with an Angel in the doorway. Dark effect.

63. 1805.—\*Famine. [Butts.]

Very terrible and grimly quiet, though not remarkable in executive respects; the colour laid-in pale. A child seeks the breast of its dead mother; a young woman paces about objectless and desolate; a man strips with his teeth the flesh off the arm of a naked corpse, while a woman, with famine-wrung features, turns away in horror. For scenery, a gaunt, leafless tree; the entrance to a savagely bare building like a sepulchre; and unclad hills, under an ordinary sky.

64. 1805.—The Whirlwind—Ezekiel's vision of the Cherubim and Eyed Wheels. [Butts.]

Not slightly in execution, but the Eyed Wheels very curious and living. The Deity is above; Ezekiel, very small comparatively to the other figures, lies below.

65. 1805.—\*Samson bursting his bonds. [Butts.]

Samson has too much of an operatic aspect, yet the essentials of the subject are fully rendered. Dalilah, behind him, stares in

dismay at the upshot of her conspiracy; three mailed Philistines make off to the left, crowding each other in their precipitation—an admirable group for consentaneous motion. The colour is rather neutral.

66. 1805.—\*Samson subdued. [Butts.]

Energetic and fine composition and actions. Of Samson the back only is seen; he lies wholly naked, and quite hairless now save towards the nape of the neck, slumbering upon the knees of Dalilah, herself semi-nude, and with an air of triumph. Three Philistine warriors, very carelessly drawn, look in timidly from behind a curtain. Pale in colour.

67. 1805.—Noah and the Rainbow. [Butts.]

Mentioned in the account printed at p. 278, Vol. II.

68. 1805.—‘Thou art fairer than the children of men. . . . Gird Thee with Thy sword upon Thy thigh, O Thou Most Mighty, according to Thy worship and renown.’—Psalm xlv. [Butts.]  
*Water-colour over a strong ground of pencilling.*

Pale, and with a slovenly aspect, through the method of execution, though fine upon inspection. The Son of God is represented seated in heaven, reading in a book; two Angels are beside Him, with grounded swords swathed in flame. These figures stand out upon a sky strong in rayed light.

69. 1805.—The Four-and-Twenty Elders casting their Crowns before the Divine Throne. [Butts.]

A determined effort on Blake's part is evident here to realize the several features of the transcendent vision; the Divine Being, ‘like a jasper and a sardine stone’ in hue, the creatures ‘full of eyes before and behind,’ and the like. A telling success in an almost impracticable attempt.

70. 1805.—The Wise and Foolish Virgins. [Butts.]

Mentioned in the account printed at p. 278, Vol. II.

71. 1805.—The King of Babylon. ‘Hell from beneath is moved for thee, to meet thee at thy coming.’—Isaiah xiv. 9. [Butts.]

Mentioned in the account printed at p. 278, Vol. II.

72. 1805.—God judging Adam. [Butts.] *Colour-printed.*

Mentioned in the account printed at p. 278, Vol. II.

73. 1805.—‘Christ appearing.’ [Butts.] *Colour-printed.*

Mentioned in the account, p. 278, Vol. II. Perhaps connected with the *Tempera* (No. 164) of Christ appearing to the Apostles after the Resurrection.

74. 1805.—The Horse. *Oil-picture (?) on copper.*

See p. 224—5, Vol. I. A fine miniature-like painting of the admirable engraved subject, some four inches or less in height. Coloured in yellowish-grey half-tints.

75. 1805.—War. [Butts.]

~~See~~ Mentioned in the account, p. 278. Vol. II.

76. 1806.—\*The Repose of the Holy Family; also named The Humility of our Saviour. *Water-colour, only half-painted.*

The fugitives are reposing under a palm-tree; their donkey drinks of the stream; an animal shaggy and bristly enough to illustrate the 'doctrine of correspondences,' as though he represented so much pabulum of thistles and stubble. The varied landscape background is the most pleasurable feature of this water-colour, a poor one in surface handling.

77. 1806.—Jaques and the wounded Stag, from 'As You Like It.'

This water-colour appears in a volume of Shakespeare, now belonging to Mr. Macmillan. It is far from being a good design; the lavish display of blood upon the stag being the most remarkable thing about it.

78. 1806.—Hamlet and the Ghost. *In neutral tints.*

In the same volume as the preceding. Hamlet kneels, as the Ghost casts a last unforgettable look at him before parting. One of the finest specimens of Blake's art. Given in Vol. I. chap. XXIV.

79. 1806 (?).—

'A spirit vaulting from a cloud  
To turn and wind a fiery Pegasus.'

In the same volume as the two preceding. The design looks unaccountable enough, but must be the same as that of the fresco, No. 36. There is a rearing horse, a man floating and holding a lasso, a woman above on a cloud with a book, and a rising sun.

80. 1806.—Design for the Dedication to Blair's 'Grave.'

Executed with most special care and completeness in pale semi-neutral tints; a very beautiful work. The subject is the Deliverance of the Human Soul from Death, and the Ascension of the Just. Above are two angels, one sheathing the sword, another holding the unequally-poised balance and a sealed roll; a third descends with a key to unlock the fetters of the grave. A mother with her adolescent and infant family rises to the left; a man and children to the right, their chains riven, clasp their upraised hands in thankfulness for the great deliverance. Between the upper angels a space is left for the inscription. See p. 252, Vol. I.

81. 1806.—From Blair's 'Grave.' 'Prone on the lonely grave she drops.'

82. 1806.—'By the waters of Babylon we sat down and wept.'

83. 1806.—Satan watching the Endearments of Adam and Eve.  
[Butts.]

Essentially the same as No. 89*d*, but with differences of detail; the figure of Satan, for instance, being turned towards the left, instead of the right; the flesh here is almost colourless, and the feeling on the whole more softly sensuous. The serpent, with a comb of fire, 'in his own volumes interwolved,' shuffles away from the feet of the First Parents. Very beautifully drawn, rich in form, and charming in impression.

## 84. 1806.—The Last Judgment.

A very elaborate treatment of the subject, exceedingly fine. It used to belong to Sir W. Stirling-Maxwell.

## 85. 1807.—Twelve Designs from 'Paradise Lost.'

This fine series belongs to Mr. Aspland, of Liverpool. It is of smaller size than the similar series described under No. 89, but the number of subjects is larger—twelve instead of nine. Those subjects which correspond in the two series are essentially alike in design, yet with numerous and interesting variations of detail. Mr. Aspland's set does not include subject *e*, Satan, as a toad, haunting the dreams of Eve, but comprises the following four extra subjects :—

(a) Satan calling up his Legions. Book I.

(b) Satan at the Gate of Hell, guarded by Sin and Death. Book II.

(c) Satan's Entry into Paradise—God sends Raphael to warn Adam. Book V.

(d) The Condemnation of Adam and Eve. Book X.

86. 1807.—The Vision of Queen Katharine—Shakespeare's 'Henry VIII.' [Butts.] *Slight tint of water-colour.*

Treated quite from the ideal, not the historic or dramatic point of view; and a leading example of Blake's *accurate* manner. Katharine, crowned and young-looking, with light hair, 'makes in her sleep signs of rejoicing, and holdeth up her hands to heaven,' or to the Angels, of whom a considerable number are floating about in all parts of the composition, with wreaths, harps, &c. Their small size gives them rather a fairy-like than a strictly angelic character. The attendants, Griffith and Patience, both dozing, are an ancient bearded man with a book, and a youthful woman. See the following number, for which this appears to be a preparation. It was exhibited in Manchester in 1857.

## 87. 1807.—The same.

This is the work painted for Sir Thomas Lawrence (see p. 401, Vol. I.), and is very elaborately executed, with a great glory of light shooting through ragged drifts of darkness. The purity of colour is somewhat affected by the strong effort to get relief and play of light. Katharine is finer here than in the preceding.

## 88. 1807.—The same.

In the Shakespeare volume. See No. 77.

89. 1807-8.—The Last Judgment. *Tempera.* See pp. 260-2, &c. Vol. I.

A small picture highly finished in drawing, but slight in colour, the white predominating save on the side of the condemned. Some of the figures of the blessed are of extreme loveliness, and the grouping is admirable.

## 90. 1808.—\*NINE DESIGNS from 'Paradise Lost.' [Butts.]

This is a marvellously fine series: Blake is here king of all his powers of design, draughtsmanship, conception, spiritual meaning and impression. The colour is throughout good, often splendid; the execution accurate and sustained; the style of form grand, sweeping, and tense. This series (belonging to Mr. J. C. Strange) would of itself suffice to rank Blake among the heroes of the art.

## (a) \*The Casting of the Rebel Angels into Hell. Book VI.

A great example of energetic design; the devils hurled down with huge velocity, and a Michelangelo-like power of action. The Son of God, in a disc of pale crimson flame, draws His bow against them, the shaft of the arrow being imagined, not represented. The central demon is Satan; next him falls one with a mapped-out forehead, the representative of apostate intellect, presumably Beelzebub; the flames of hell reach already above them. The angels around Christ are not equal to the rest of the subject.

## (b) \*The Creation of Eve. Book VIII.

Very spiritual and sculpturesque, without much colour. Adam lies at full length on a natural carpet of leaves, a sort of invented foliaceous form, the like of which, modified according to the purpose, appears in other designs. At the bidding of the Son of God, as Creator, Eve floats up from Adam's side; the crescent moon above her in a deep, dusky sky. The evening flowers are shut; the trees seem bound in slumber.

## (c) \*'Father, Thy word is passed, Man shall find grace.' Book III.

The Son stands as intercessor before God the Father; four youthful angels hover with downward sway, bearing crowns. The whole of the celestial group is rather in grisaille than in colour. Satan, armed with shield and spear, floats below, subjugated, but unextinguished in rebellion.

## (d) \*Satan watching the Endearments of Adam and Eve. Book IV.

Very grand in the lines of the seated figures of Adam and Eve. Satan, above the floral bower which over-arches them, holds the serpent—an amazingly subtle, prismatic-hued serpent—which seems in horrid council with him, draining his vitals. Satan has a languid, almost 'sentimental' air, yet very terrible. The sun sets to the right, while the stars and moon are in the opposite space of nightly sky. See No. 83.

## (e) \*Satan, as a Toad, haunting the Dreams of Eve. Book IV.

The natural couch upon which Adam and Eve lie (see *b* above) is curious; a mass of rounded forms, simulating shut roses, but unfortunately solid-looking, like peaches. Two angels float above, with small javelins.

## (f) \*Raphael and Adam in conversation, Eve ministering to them. Book V.

A most beautiful Eve (as frequently the case with Blake), exactly realizing the high ideal 'naked and not ashamed.'



Raphael, with a grand action of the upraised arms, and his disspread wings meeting at the tips in a noble ogee curve, is narrating the great creative acts, or possibly cautioning Adam against his impending danger; he listens in awe. The natural chairs, table, and cups, formed by the vegetation, are ingeniously managed. In the distance is an extensive landscape, with numerous animals; the Tree of Life at the summit, with fruit glowing like illumination-lamps, or the jewel-fruit of Aladdin; the serpent is coiled up its trunk, lying fearfully in wait.

(g) \*Eve eating the forbidden Fruit. Book IX.

Wonderful exceedingly. Eve, again most beautiful, eats out of the jaws of the serpent the fruit which he presents to her. Other fruits hang from the branches, glowing (as in the preceding design) with ruddy luminousness. The trunk of the tree is cramped with huge parasitic thorn-stems, which reach down along the ground, as it were the roots of the tree itself. Ghastly forked lightning plays round Eve, lurid and menacing. At the other (left) side of the tree stands Adam, as in a distinct plane of the composition. He is yet guiltless and unconscious of the evil; round him too play the forked lightnings, chain-like, but less angry in colour. The storm-sky blackens as the doom culminates.

(h) \*Michael foretelling the Crucifixion to Adam:—

‘But to the cross He nails thy enemies,—

The law that is against thee and the sins

Of all mankind, with Him there crucified.’—Book XII.

Christ on the cross is visibly brought before Adam, who stands adoring—very fine in form. At the foot of the cross lie two human figures, one of which is possibly ‘the Law,’ and some bestial heads symbolising ‘the Sins,’ or Vices it may be presumed. The Serpent is twined there also, his crest set beneath the foot of Christ. At the bottom of the composition Eve is sleeping; a beautiful, grand, rich form. The Archangel, in this and the succeeding design, is unfortunately a failure; a kind of over-handsome classic warrior. Blake has tried hard to hit the mark, but somehow the inspiration would not come.

(i) \*Adam and Eve taken by Michael out of Eden.—Book XII.

Adam’s first step out of Eden stumbles upon a thorn—admirably thought of: a thistle is beside it. Both he and Eve look with scared revulsion upon the serpent, wondrously treacherous, crawling and accursed, yet with malice gratified. Above this group are seen four red-bearded angels, represented as of the middle age of man, upon blood-red horses, and with flames; while a huge wreath of crimson fire, like a funereal pall, wind-shaken, flaps over the head of Michael.

91. 1808.—Jacob’s Ladder. [Butts.] See pp. 264, Vol. I., and 161, Vol. II.

92. 1808.—The Angels hovering over the Body of Jesus in the Sepulchre. See pp. 264, Vol. I., and 161, Vol. II.

93. 1808.—\*The Canterbury Pilgrimage, from Chaucer—‘Sir Jeffrey Chaucer and the nine-and-twenty Pilgrims on their

Journey to Canterbury.' [Butts.] *Tempera*. See pp. 273-82, Vol. I., and 142-151, Vol. II.

Sent to the International Exhibition, 1862. The colour of this fine work appears to have darkened, making the general impression of the scene a rather sombre one.

94. 1809 or earlier.—\*The Spiritual Form of Nelson guiding Leviathan, in whose wreathings are enfolded the Nations of the Earth. *Tempera*. See p. 139, Vol. II.

The date given is conjectural; 1809 is the latest possible, that being the date of the 'Descriptive Catalogue.'

95. 1809 or earlier.—\*The Spiritual Form of Pitt guiding Behe-moth. *Tempera*. See p. 140, Vol. II.

96. 1809 or earlier.—\*The Ancient Britons—The Three who escaped from King Arthur's last Battle. *Tempera*. See pp. 276-7, Vol. I., and 153-7, Vol. II.

97. 1809 or earlier.—The Goats (browsing the vine-leaves wherein some savage girls had dressed themselves). *Tempera* (?). See p. 158, No. 7, Vol. II.

98. 1809 or earlier.—The Spiritual Preceptor, from Swedenborg. *Tempera* (?). See p. 138, No. 8, Vol. II.,

99. 1809 or earlier.—Ruth parting from Naomi. *Colour-printed*. See p. 162, Vol. II.

I conjecture this to be the Ruth named in the 'Descriptive Catalogue,' though Blake there terms it a drawing. This design is inscribed by him 'Fresco,' but appears to have on it some colour-printing, and to be chiefly executed in water-colour with a good deal of body-colour. It differs from No. 50 in the more downward action of the arms and hands of both Naomi and Ruth, the latter with her head bowed as low as her mother-in-law's bosom. Orpah bends in going away, with a hurried step as though a little ashamed of her departure, and anxious to be out of sight—a fine touch of nature. The background is a dark-green mountain-land: the colour a little heavy, and the design as a whole hardly so beautiful as No. 50, fine though it is.

100. 1809 or earlier. — The Bard, from Gray. *Tempera*. See Blake's 'Descriptive Catalogue,' p. 152-3.

A gorgeous piece of colour-tone, with gold amid the pigments. The water-colour No. 6, an earlier work, may or may not have been similar to this in composition.

101. 1809 or earlier.—The Brahmins—Mr. Wilkin translating the Geeta.

See p. 161, Vol. II., where this and the three following are stated to be 'drawings:' it seems clear that 'water-colour drawings' is meant.

102. 1809 or earlier.—The body of Abel found by Adam and Eve; Cain, who was about to bury it, fleeing from the face of his Parents. [Butts.] See p. 161, Vol. II.

Full of grand horror and vigorous action. Adam and Eve wail over their slaughtered son.

103. 1809.—Richard III. and the Ghosts. *Neutral tints.*

In the same Shakespeare volume as No. 77. The candles shine through the spectral form of Henry VI.

104. 1809.—The Babylonian Woman on the Seven-headed Beast. [British Museum.]

Her face is of a heavy type (something like that of the Kemble family), her head crowned with a mural diadem. The flesh of the Beast is red, with a smoky tinge; his heads and figure human, though of a Calibanic cast. The woman holds in her right hand a golden serpent-handled cup, whence flows forth a wreath of figures, also bearing cups and trumpets. They swoop down towards small foreground figures of knights fighting. At them points the woman's left hand, as if to claim them as her own; men drunk with her cup of ambition, animosity, and the pride of life. Complete in execution and colour, though the latter partakes rather of the character of 'tinting.' A valuable example of Blake, yet with a less daringly original aspect than might have been expected in such a subject. See p. 291, Vol. I.

105. 1809.—Six Illustrations to Milton's 'Hymn for the Nativity.'

(a) The Annunciation to the Shepherds.

(b) The Nativity.

(c) The Overthrow of Paganism.

(d) Moloch.

(e) 'Typhon huge ending in snaky twine,' &c.

(f) The Slumber.

106. 1809.—Portrait of Mrs. Butts. [Butts.] *Miniature.*

The creamy flesh, and the general knack of execution, assimilate closely enough to the style of most miniature-painters.

107. Circa 1810.—Portrait of Mr. Butts, Jun. [Butts.] *Miniature.*

The son of the Mr. Butts with whom Blake was chiefly connected. There is an elegant quality in the miniature, which conforms fairly to the requirements of portraiture. Some touches of gilt appear in the hair.

108. 1811.—\*The Judgment of Paris. [Butts.] *Colour-printed.*

Discord, triple-headed, is flying off; Mercury floating on the air; Cupid exults as he handles his arrows; Paris, languidly seated, seems almost to shrink from the decision which he is in the act of making. His crouched dog has *Παρις* inscribed on its collar. The three goddesses, as well as the other figures, are splendid in form; and the whole design belongs to the highest order of Blake's work, both in spirit and in treatment.

109. Circa 1820.—The Ghost of a Flea. *Tempera.*

A small picture, much wrought up. The flea, full-length, is a scaled semi-human figure, striding energetically, and holding a goblet of blood. The head is less unhuman, and less strikingly invented, than that engraved in Vol. I. p. 303. See List 2, Nos. 65, 82.

110. Circa 1820 to 1827.—\*The Last Judgment. *Tempera*. See pp. 260, 401, Vol. I.

Seven feet by five feet in dimensions, and estimated to contain 1,000 figures. A later work than the one belonging to Lord Leconfield, No. 89.

111. 1822.—\*The Creation of Eve. [Linnell.] See No. 90 *b*.

This design, and the two following, are duplicates, but with some difference in tone of colour, &c. of the three in Mr. Strange's noble series from 'Paradise Lost,' No. 90, on the whole carried a trifle less far.

112. 1822.—\*Satan watching the Endearments of Adam and Eve. [Linnell.] See No. 90 *d*.

113. 1822.—\*Michael foretelling the Crucifixion to Adam. [Linnell.] See No. 90 *z*.

Great in effect of darting light and darkness,

114. 1822.—\*The Wise and Foolish Virgins. [Linnell.]

Very noble : the composition admirable, both in an artistic sense and in expression of the subject—the effect dark and night-like. The Wise Virgins are in a serried, upright group, departing to the left ; the Foolish Virgins distracted and scattered, some upon their knees. Above them an angel, floating in the sky in a horizontal position, blows his trumpet for the coming of the Bridegroom.

115. 1822.—The same.

A smaller version of the same composition, executed for Sir Thomas Lawrence. See page 401, Vol. I.

116. 1822.—The Rich Man in Purgatory.

Also done for Sir T. Lawrence. 'Purgatory' appears to be an euphuism for 'Hell,' and the subject that of 'Dives and Lazarus.'

117. Circa 1822.—A COMPLETE SET of Water-colour Designs for the Job Engravings. [Butts.] See pp. 325-6, Vol. I.

These are much larger than the engravings, and give only the central subjects, without the borderings or mottoes. They are generally pale in colour, with a less full and concentrated effect than the engravings, and by no means equal to them in power and splendid decorative treatment of the light and shade. On the other hand, they are often completer and naturally freer in expression, and do not exhibit a certain tendency, noticeable generally in the engravings, to over-sturdiness of build and physiognomy in the figures. (See also the photointaglios.) As distinguished from the engravings, the following are the most noticeable of the water-colours :—

- (a) 'Thus did Job continually.'

On the sun is written : 'Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name : Thy will be.'

- (b) The Destruction of Job's Sons and Daughters.

The figure of Satan much finer in the water-colour ; and the

whole composition of the victims, with their upraised arms, appealing and struggling, more impressive.

- (c) 'Then went Satan forth from the presence of the Lord.'

Exhibits some considerable difference from the engraving in the arrangement, though not in the general conception, of the heavenly group.

- (d) The Arrival of Job's Friends.

As a general rule, the friends are less individualized the one from the other in the water-colours. Here the traces of the sun-rays are less distinct: the hills are finely tinged in purple and green. Job's wife has the aspect of old age; an aspect less discernible in several others of the designs and engravings, especially in those where she is free from sorrow.

- (e) 'The just upright man is laughed to scorn.'

Very fine, and one of the fullest in colour.

- (f) Job's terrific Dream.

The serpent is gorgeous in prismatic tints—continually a strong point with Blake.

- (g) 'When the morning stars sang together.'

The angelic group at the summit consists of only four figures, fully brought into the composition. In the engraving, the effect of sublimity and multitude is centupled by adding the upreared arms of two other angels to right and left, passing out of the composition. This appears to have been an after-thought during the progress of the engraving itself, as two thin wreaths of cloud, which close-in and 'finish off' the group in the design, appear also in the engraving.

- (h) Leviathan and Behemoth.

Splendidly tinted, and, on the whole, quite as fine in the design as in the engraving. Behemoth is longer-muzzled in the former.

- (i) 'I have heard Thee with the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth Thee.'

In the drawing, the friends do not turn their faces away from the presence of God, but towards Him, though kept buried in their hands. There is a fine aspect of portent in the sky and background to the right.

- (j) Job's Sacrifice for his Friends.

Job here stands full-fronting the spectator: the friends are more upright than in the engraving.

- (k) 'Every one also gave him a piece of money.'

The neighbours are three only, instead of four, and the design otherwise somewhat different from the engraving: the latter having the advantage.

- (l) Job and his Three Daughters.

Very bad in the handling of the colour, which is evidently Mrs. Blake's. Differs considerably from the engraving. The

history narrated by Job, as shown forth by way of vision, comes overhead, instead of in rounded side compartments. The group of Job and his Daughters is surrounded by grazing sheep, with a lamb and a sheep-dog lying in the foreground to right and left.

(m) The final Prosperity of Job.

On the sun is written : 'Great and marvellous are Thy works, Lord God Almighty ; just and true.'

118. 1823-5.—A SECOND COMPLETE SET of Water-colour Designs for the Job Engravings. [Linnell.]

See pp. 328-9, Vol. I., and, under the preceding No., the observations on the set which now belongs to Lord Houghton. The two sets correspond closely enough, Mr. Linnell's being somewhat higher in colour, and more developed in style generally. The following are noticeable :—

(a) Satan before the Lord.

Highly coloured ; the flame about Satan is especially vivid in effect.

(b) 'Then went Satan forth from the presence of the Lord.'

The guardian angels are represented as overclouded.

(c) Satan pouring Disease on Job.

Powerful in lurid colour.

(d) Job's terrific Dream.

The serpent (contrary to 117 *f*) is dull grey. The lower part of the design has a powerful effect.

(e) God appearing to Job in the Whirlwind.

Dark grey tone of colour.

(f) 'When the morning stars sang together.'

See 117 *g*, with which this design corresponds in the point there adverted to.

(g) Leviathan and Behemoth.

Deeper in colour than 117 *h*.

(h) 'Thou hast fulfilled the judgment of the wicked.'

Strong in colour.

(i) 'I have heard Thee with the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth Thee.'

Corresponds with 117 *i*, in the position of the friends. The expression of Job is exceedingly noble.

(j) Job's Sacrifice for his Friends.

Corresponds with the engraving, rather than with 117 *j*. The engraving, however, introduces an additional point of advantage by making the composition upright, instead of lengthways.

(k) 'Every one also gave him a piece of money.'

Also closer to the engraving than 117 *k*. Pale in colour.

(l) Job and his three Daughters.

Comes very near the engraving in the details. It so far corresponds, however, with 117 *l*, that three sheep and a sheep-dog are introduced in the foreground. Almost colourless.

119. 1825 (?).—The same subject. [Butts.] *Tempera*.

Also a near approach to the engraving ; the visionary incidents being here much as in that, though somewhat higher up in the composition.

120. 1825 (?).—Job surrounded by his Family ; and Job and his three Daughters.

Two water-colour sketches, now framed together.

121. 1825.—The Virgin and Child. *Tempera*.

122. 1825.—TWELVE DESIGNS to 'Paradise Regained.' [Linnell.]

Small water-colours neatly executed, the finishing carried to the point of stippling. See Vol. I. p. 378. Spite of its merits, the series has a remarkable affinity to the character of the poem, which is more distinguished by stately and elaborated method than by inspiration.

- (a) Christ and the Baptist, with two Angels.

- (b) The Baptism of Christ.

The figures of a woman and child are very pleasing.

- (c) Satan in Council.

The devils are seated in yellow fire.

- (d) The First Temptation—'Command that these stones be made bread.'

Fine. The mass of trees behind the figures is effective.

- (e) Mary at her Distaff, watched by two Angels.

Graceful.

- (f) Christ refusing the Banquet offered by Satan.

Satan, in the form of an old man, swoops in the air above. The chief female figure has a seductive aspect, well conceived.

- (g) The Second Temptation—Satan displaying the Kingdoms of the Earth.

The kingdoms are seen within a flaming glory. Satan has a black nimbus, of barred form.

- (h) Christ's Troubled Dream.

Serpents, a lion, &c., haunt the sleeper. Able.

- (i) Morning chasing away the Phantoms.

The morning is a woman with rosy hair and azure nimbus. The finest design of the series.

- (j) The Third Temptation—Christ on a Pinnacle of the Temple.

The Temple is of a Gothic type, with many pinnacles. Satan, finally baffled, falls downward.

- (k) Christ ministered to by Angels.

Good.

- (l) Christ returning to Mary.

Two other figures appear to represent Joseph and the Baptist.

123. 1825-6.—\*NINETY-EIGHT DESIGNS from Dante's 'Divina Commedia.' [Linnell.] *Water-colours, often decidedly unfinished, seldom quite complete: occasionally pencil drawings only, which are retained in this List, rather than the second, for convenience.* See p. 375, Vol. I.

These are among the last works executed by Blake, and form on the whole, a very fine series, though not uniformly equal in merit: seven only, all from the Hell, have been engraved. So individual an artist as Blake could not fail frequently to run counter to other people's conceptions of the poet: but he certainly united in a singular degree the qualifications needed to translate Dante into form. Among the points necessary to be preserved, perhaps the one least fully expressed is the peculiar mediævalism of Dante, though Blake was by no means destitute of the feeling at times. Dante is represented, throughout, as a noble-looking, ideal young man, often almost feminine in person, clad in red. Virgil, not older than of early middle age, is in blue. (Besides the ninety-eight designs here enumerated, a slight inscribed diagram of the Hell-circles, and two other mere sketches, one of them of uncertain subject, may be considered as outlying members of the series.)

#### THE HELL.—Sixty-eight Designs.

- (a) Dante running from the Three Beasts.—Canto I.

Virgil comes floating through the air. The beasts are all sorts of colours; the leopard, for instance, being varied with lake and blue, and without spots. There is a wonderful effect of light beaming prismatic round the sun.

- (b) Dante and Virgil penetrating the Forest.—Canto I. *Very unfinished.*

Fine in feeling.

- (c) The Mission of Virgil.—Canto II. *Unfinished.*

Beatrice contemplates Dante, beset by the beasts. At the summit is a large group of the Deity in wrath, and a supernatural being, presumably the Genius of Florence. Two side-figures below, seated amid flames, here blue, there red, are very fearful-looking. There are several other details carrying out the meaning of the whole subject.

- (d) The Inscription over Hell-Gate.—Canto III. *Unfinished.*

Grand. Terrible, conical, upright flames, blue, red, and many-tinted, burn amid the mounded circles of Hell.

- (e) The Vestibule of Hell, and the Souls mustering to cross the Acheron.—Canto III.

The souls unworthy of either heaven or hell are tormented by the hornets and worms: above, in the dusky air, are their companion-angels, equally excluded. The heavy, murky Acheron is noble, and the whole design very fine upon examination.

- (f) Charon and the Condemned Souls.—Canto III. *Little beyond pencil.*

Charon is very grotesque—almost ludicrous.



## (g) Minos.—Canto IV.

Contains some wonderfully energetic and inventive actions. Terrible retributive angel-heads glance out from behind Minos.

(h) Homer, bearing the sword, and his Companions.—Canto IV. *Pencil—slight.*(i) The Antique Poets and Philosophers, &c.—Canto IV. *Half finished.*

Quite a different composition from the preceding. The poets are under ideal trees, the leafage of which has a certain suggestion of the laurel or bay.

## (j) The Circle of the Lustful—Francesca da Rimini.—Canto V.

Engraved in close correspondence with the design, but this is considerably the finer; very wonderful in the sweep of the vortex and in colour; the flesh of the sufferers crimson-streaked. Virgil's head is fused into the light of the visionary disc representing the kiss of Francesca and Paolo.

(k) The Circle of the Gluttons, with Cerberus.—Canto VI. *A mere preparation for colouring.*(l) Cerberus.—Canto VI. *Unfinished.*

His doggish heads have a dragon-like character. He grips, in human hands, the souls, which are pigmies in comparison.

(m) The same. *Unfinished.*

The finer of the two. Dante and Virgil here are made more important.

(n) Plutus.—Canto VII. *Colour only begun.*

He has an insane look, corresponding to Dante's conception: his right hand is upon a bag marked 'money.' Fine.

(o) The Stygian Lake, with the Ireful Sinners fighting.—Canto VII. *Unfinished.*

Most admirably invented. The sinners, in two bands, hurl themselves one against the other, through the waters.

(p) Virgil repelling Filippo Argenti from the Boat.—Canto VIII. *Unfinished.*

Fine.

(q) Dante and Virgil crossing towards the City of Dis.—Canto VIII. *Indian Ink.*

The scene is everything here, not the figures. Interesting.

(r) The Angel crossing Styx.—Canto IX. *Only begun.*

Would have come very fine. The whirls of the vortex, which accompanies the angel, coil like a gigantic serpent.

(s) The Gorgon-head, and the Angel opening the Gate of Dis.—Canto IX. *Only begun in colour.*

The gate, with the angel touching it, forms the chief subject.

(t) Farinata degli Uberti.—Canto X. *Only begun.*

A very fine beginning.

- (u) The Minotaur.—Canto XII. *Only begun in colour.*  
The monster is ramping and roaring. Grand and monumental.
- (v) The Centaurs, and the River of Blood.—Canto XII. *Pencil outline, with only an indication of colour.*
- (w) The Harpies and the Suicides.—Canto XIII.  
The harpies resemble old parrot-like dowagers, with very bright plumage. The trees show the forms of the suicides embodied in them.
- (x) The Hell-hounds hunting the Destroyers of their own Goods.—Canto XIII. *Only begun in colour.*  
Most admirable in motion. The landscape counts for much in this composition.
- (y) The Blasphemers.—Canto XIV. *Only begun in colour.*  
The chief group is excellent, running to avoid the rain of fire. A woman is a principal figure in it.
- (z) Capaneus the Blasphemer.—Canto XIV.  
Not so violent in action as might have been expected. A strange medley of colour.
- (a<sup>1</sup>) The Symbolic Figure of the course of Human History described by Virgil.—Canto XIV. *Half executed.*  
The ‘great old man,’ as Virgil terms him, is beardless. Moderately good.
- (b<sup>1</sup>) Jacopo Rusticucci and his Comrades.—Canto XVI. *Half executed in colour.*  
Very fine in character of the subject and in motion.
- (c<sup>1</sup>) The Usurers.—Canto XVII. *Pencil-sketch.*  
One of them is in the act of low sarcasm described by Dante—putting out his tongue ‘like an ox that licks his nose.’
- (d<sup>1</sup>) Geryon conveying Dante and Virgil downwards.—Canto XVII. *Only begun in colour.*
- (e<sup>1</sup>) The Seducers chased by Devils.—Canto XVIII. *Only begun in colour.*  
Admirable. In front lies a mummy-like figure, preyed upon by a Saurian. No such incident is traceable in the poem: perhaps it represents, in this first Circle of the Fraudulent Sinners, ‘Fraud, whereby every conscience is bitten,’ as Virgil phrases it in Canto XI.
- (f<sup>1</sup>) The Flatterers.—Canto XVIII. *Only begun in colour.*  
There are two wonderful floating figures above, whom it is difficult to account for.
- (g<sup>1</sup>) The Simoniac Pope.—Canto XIX. *The lower part unfinished in colour.*  
The figures of Dante and Virgil, locked together, at the moment of launching downwards to gaze upon the tormented soul, are most admirable, and among the most difficult achievements in the series. The colour, except in the unfinished part, is highly powerful in horrid brightness.

- (h<sup>1</sup>) The Necromancers and Augurs.—Canto XX. *Very unfinished.*

A fine beginning.

- (i<sup>1</sup>) The Devil carrying the Lucchese Magistrate to the Boiling Pitch-pool of Corrupt Officials.—Canto XXI. *A sketch, almost colourless.*

- (j<sup>1</sup>) The Devils under the Bridge.—Canto XXI. *Only begun in colour.*

Chiefly landscape : the bridge has some indications of monstrous human features. The devils form a fine agile group.

- (k<sup>1</sup>) Virgil abashing the Devils.—Canto XXI. *Only begun in colour.*

- (l<sup>1</sup>) The Devils setting out with Dante and Virgil.—Canto XXI. *Only begun in colour.*

- (m<sup>1</sup>) The Devils, with Dante and Virgil, by the side of the Pool.—Canto XXII. *Only begun in colour.*

Two of the bridge-like arcs of the hell-circles are seen intersecting.

- (n<sup>1</sup>) Ciampolo tormented by the Devils.—Canto XXII. *Slight colour.*

Nearly as in the engraving. Excellent.

- (o<sup>1</sup>) The baffled Devils fighting.—Canto XXII.

Same design as in the engraving, which it surpasses in expression.

- (p<sup>1</sup>) Dante and Virgil escaping from the Devils.—Canto XXIII. *Only begun in colour.*

There are wonderful spirit and impulse in the action of the devils as they fly to the last limit of their circle, which they are doomed never to overpass.

- (q<sup>1</sup>) The Hypocrites with Caiaphas.—Canto XXIII. *Only begun in colour.*

Here again there is a great flying group of devils. Would have come excellent, if completed.

- (r<sup>1</sup>) The laborious Passage along the Rocks.—Canto XXIV. *Very slight.*

Chiefly landscape.

- (s<sup>1</sup>) The same. *Very slight.*

A different design : also chiefly landscape.

- (t<sup>1</sup>) The Thieves and Serpents.—Canto XXIV. *Only begun in colour.*

One of the sinners is a woman. An excellent design, with a conflagration of flame in the background.

- (u<sup>1</sup>) The Serpent attacking Vanni Fucci.—Canto XXIV. *Only begun in colour.*

Fucci is in a stooping posture : the serpent bites him in the neck, as in the poem.

(v<sup>1</sup>) Fucci 'making the figs' against God.—Canto XXV.

'Making the figs' is a grossly insulting gesture, done by inserting the thumb between the fore and middle fingers. An admirable design, altogether, though in the figure of Fucci more might have been expected. Serpents wriggle in earth and air.

(w<sup>1</sup>) Cacus.—Canto XXV. *Almost colourless.*

The figure of Cacus, with the serpents about him, constitutes the whole subject.

(x<sup>1</sup>) The six-footed Serpent attacking Agnolo Brunelleschi.—Canto XXV. *Colour washy, but tolerably complete.*

The fourth of the engraved set. Admirably horrid.

(y<sup>1</sup>) Brunelleschi half transformed by the Serpent.—Canto XXV. *Colour only begun.*

The miserable Brunelleschi is a very hideous and debased object.

(z<sup>1</sup>) The Serpent attacking Buoso Donati.—Canto XXV.

The fifth of the engraved set, to which it closely corresponds; the serpent, however, has no feet in the water-colour. Donati is already turning green at the approach of the transforming influence. Grand.

(a<sup>2</sup>) Donati transformed into a Serpent, Guercio Cavalcanti re-transformed from a Serpent to a Man.—Canto XXV. *Colour only begun.*

There is a dreadful quietness in this design, very impressive.

(b<sup>2</sup>) Ulysses and Diomed swathed in the same flame.—Canto XXVI. *Colour only begun.*

The beginning of one of Blake's tremendous effects of fire, but merely a beginning.

(c<sup>2</sup>) The Schismatics and Sowers of Discord.—Canto XXVIII.

An admirable and copious design. The figure of Mahomet retains some symptom of the traditional likeness of the Prophet.

(d<sup>2</sup>) The same.—Mosca de' Lamberti and Bertram de Born.—Canto XXVIII.

Splendid in colour. There is a bold curve of hill here, with conical flames before and behind it.

(e<sup>2</sup>) The Pit of Disease—The Falsifiers.—Canto XXIX. *Colour only begun.*

Engraved. Fine in the composition of the materials, and in the colour, as far as it goes.

(f<sup>2</sup>) Same Pit.—Gianni Schicchi and Myrrha.—Canto XXX. *Slight colour.*

Schicchi and Myrrha have bestial, not human, heads: a point of Blake's own invention, though probably suggested by a simile introduced by Dante into this passage. Another sinner is tumbling down alongside the bridge—perhaps a soul newly arrived to its doom, which is a vivid and important point of invention.

- (g<sup>2</sup>) The Primæval Giants sunk in the Soil.—Canto XXXI.  
*Slight colour.*

Grand in scale.

- (h<sup>2</sup>) Nimrod.—Canto XXXI. *Almost colourless.*

Would have come very fine, if completed. An indication of the unfinished tower of Babel is given behind Nimrod.

- (i<sup>2</sup>) Ephialtes and two other Titans.—Canto XXXI. *Almost colourless.*

The beginning of a very characteristic Blakeism.

- (j) Antæus setting down Dante and Virgil.—Canto XXXI.

This is about the highest in finish of the whole series. The scene is full of blue tones, with ragged skirts of supernatural fire. Antæus is black, blue, and raw in the flesh-tints, and his pose extremely daring, as he sets down Dante and Virgil, and turns upwards again, in a single momentary action. Very fine.

- (k<sup>2</sup>) The Circle of the Traitors.—The Alberti Brothers.—Canto XXXII. *Almost colourless.*

Their hair is iced together, as in the poem. Very ghastly, and would have come one of the most excellent of the series.

- (l<sup>2</sup>) Same Circle.—Dante striking against Bocca degli Abati.—Canto XXXII. *Almost colourless.*

Engraved and copied on p. 377, Vol. I.

- (m<sup>2</sup>) Dante tugging at Bocca's Hair.—Canto XXXII. *Almost colourless.*

Ugolino is seen gnawing at the head of Archbishop Ruggieri.

- (n<sup>2</sup>) Ugolino relating his Death.—Canto XXXIII. *Almost colourless.*

Ugolino is an ancient man, much of the Job type. Ruggieri has his cardinal's hat lying beside him.

- (o<sup>2</sup>) Ugolino in Prison.—Canto XXXIII. *Slight pencil-sketch, uncoloured.*

Much the same as the design engraved in the 'Gates of Paradise.' Two angels are here introduced above.

- (p<sup>2</sup>) Lucifer.—Canto XXXIV. *Very slight colour.*

Has indications of much curious detail.

#### 124. THE PURGATORY.—Twenty Designs. [Linnell.]

- (a) Dante and Virgil re-beholding the Sun as they issue from Hell.—Canto I. *Very slight.*

The beginning of a fine effect of light.

- (b) Dante, Virgil, and Cato.—Canto I. *Pencil-sketch, with hardly any colour.*

- (c) The Angelic Boat wafting over the Souls for Purgation.—Canto II. *Pencil-sketch, with hardly any colour.*

- (d) The Mountain leading to Purgatory.—Canto IV. *Only begun.*

A landscape subject.

- (e) The Ascent of the Mountain.—Canto IV. *Slight colour.*

A grand sea, with the sun obscured by cloud. This would have come a splendid design.

- (f) The Souls of those who only repented at the point of death.—Cantos V. and VI. *Slight colour.*

The souls float about in all directions.

- (g) The Lawn with the Kings and Angels.—Cantos VII. and VIII. *Slight colour.*

- (h) Lucia carrying Dante in his sleep.—Canto IX.

Beautiful in character of moonlight, and fine in sentiment.

- (i) Dante and Virgil approaching the Angel who guards the Entrance of Purgatory.—Canto IX. *Slight.*

The angel is within a door having a pointed arch. Huge blood-red clouds traverse the sun, which is shining upon the sea. The beginning of a very strong, but as yet harsh, effect of colour.

- (j) The Angel marking Dante with the sevenfold P.—Canto IX. *Slight colour.*

Also harsh as yet.

- (k) The Rock sculptured with the Recovery of the Ark and the Annunciation.—Canto X. *Colour only begun.*

There is a tremendous black sea in the distance.

- (l) The Proud under their enormous Loads.—Canto X. *Colour only begun, and design unfinished.*

The sea here seems to be under a moonlight effect.

- (m) The Angel Descending at the close of the Circle of the Proud.—Canto XII.

The angel descends, with very energetic and beautiful lines of motion, towards Dante and Virgil, who stand on the sculptured rock.

- (n) The Souls of the Envious.—Canto XIII. *Pencil-sketch.*

- (o) The Angel inviting Dante to enter the Fire.—Canto XXVII.

The fire is at the top of a narrow steep rock-ledge; the sea is blue, the sun sinking. Very grand in subject-matter and composition.

- (p) Dante at the moment of entering the Fire.—Canto XXVII.

Very fine.

- (q) Dante and Statius sleeping, Virgil watching.—Canto XXVII. *Slight, rather neutral colour.*

One of the finest of the series; the curves of the composition very lovely, the decoratively-invented vegetation curious, the sea black and rippled. Dante's vision of Rachel and Leah is seen in the full moon.

- (r) Beatrice on the Car, Dante, and Matilda.—Canto XXIX. *Colour incomplete.*

The meandering, rippling stream is extremely pretty; the colour, if completed, would have been brilliant.

- (s) Beatrice addressing Dante.—Cantos XXIX. and XXX.

Beatrice is tinted with yellow and red, as much incarnate in herself as proper to her drapery. The griffin harnessed to the car is grand and monumental, and there is much fantasy in the gleaming of the lights and colours.

- (t) The Harlot and the Giant.—Canto XXXII. *Colour only begun.*

The colour is in an unsightly preparatory stage. The design has a good deal of curious material.

125. THE PARADISE.—Ten Designs. [Linnell.]

- (a) Dante adoring Christ.—Canto XIV. *Only begun.*

Distinguished by its daring, waved pattern-lines of fire.

- (b) A design of Circular Stairs.—Canto XIX. *Pencil-sketch.*

Canto XIX., to which Blake has referred this design, does not contain anything closely corresponding with it. Perhaps it symbolizes the relation, as in descending grades, between the divine and created intelligences.

- (c) The Recording Angel.—Canto XIX. *Half-colour.*

Represented as an aged man winged.

- (d) Beatrice and Dante in Gemini, amid the Spheres of Flame.—Canto XXIV. *Colour only begun.*

- (e) St. Peter, Beatrice, and Dante.—Canto XXIV. *Colour only begun.*

St. Peter is in a tongue-like flame of fire in mid-sky.

- (f) The same three, with St. James also.—Canto XXV. *Only begun.*

A fine beginning.

- (g) The same four, with St. John the Evangelist also.—Canto XXVI. *Only begun.*

The beginning of a very striking work. The five figures, each segregated in a sort of disc of its own, form an irregular cinquefoiled composition; John being at the apex, flanked by Peter and James, Dante at the base, and Beatrice inserted midway, towards the right.

- (h) The Deity, from whom proceed the Nine Spheres.—Canto XXVIII. *Only begun in colour.*

Curious.

- (i) Dante in the Empyrean, drinking at the River of Light.—Canto XXX. *Only begun.*

A number of distinct subjects, admissible according to the 'Doctrine of Correspondences,' are given in the background. In one of these one finds the operations of pictorial art represented.

- (j) The Queen of Heaven in Glory.—Canto XXXI. *Sketch, almost colourless.*

126. 1825. (?)—The Circle of the Lustful. [The Hell.]

Some figures which do not appear in the engraved subject: slightly washed in colour. On the back is a sketch of two figures, one of them floating. This belongs to Mr. Aspland.

## SECTION B.—UNDATED WORKS.

## ARRANGED ACCORDING TO SUBJECT.

## C.—BIBLICAL AND SACRED.

127. The Creation of Light. [Butts.]
128. 'And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it He had rested from all His work which God created and made.' [Butts.]  
 Very characteristic and fine. The Creator appears within a vesica, formed by the heads and wings of angels, encircled by the sky, rayed with yellow and other hues. The aerial effect of colour throughout the group, in which blue is freely used in the half-tones of flesh, is excellent.
129. \*The Creation of Eve—'She shall be called Woman.' [Butts.]  
 The Creator, holding a hand of Adam, who reclines under a vine, and a hand of Eve, upon a floating cloud, presents her to him. Several sheep are introduced—four of them grazing close by a slumbering lion.
130. Eve tempted by the Serpent. [Butts.] *Oil-picture on copper.*  
 A small full-length picture of a very beautiful, fair woman, holding up her right hand to take the apple which the monster-serpent, coiling beside her, lifts high above her head. The moon and a waterfall are in the background. A very carefully-painted, highly-coloured picture.
131. The Temptation. [Butts.] *Tempera.*
132. The Almighty accusing Eve.
133. The Expulsion from Eden. *Tempera, on black ground.*  
 Fine in colour.
134. Lot and his Daughters. [Butts.] *Tempera.*  
 One of the daughters is a rich, fine form.
135. Abraham and Isaac, with the Ram caught in the Thicket. [Butts.] *Tempera.*  
 Fair; full in colour: the ram very large.
136. Joseph and Potiphar's Wife. [Butts.]  
 'Joseph and Jezebel,' according to the sale-catalogue; probably Blake's own way of expressing it.
137. Moses placed in the Ark of Bulrushes. [Butts.] *Tempera.*  
 Excellently invented. The mother swoons into her husband's arms; the sister is on the watch, to give warning of any interruption. The Pyramids are prominent in the landscape.
138. 'The Compassion of Pharaoh's Daughter: the Finding of Moses.' [Butts.]  
 An exceedingly beautiful design, fully rivalling the grace and tenderness of Flaxman. The princess is a most delicious figure:



she is attended by two young girls and two lovely women. Along with the funny little Moses are his mother and sister. In the right-hand corner a pelican (not in the least like one) is feeding her young. Pale in colour.

139. \*Moses at the Burning Bush. [Butts.]

High, but not good, in colour. The treatment is interesting. The burning bush presents a small, spiral, dark flame. Moses gazes upon it, much as might any spectator of a curious phenomenon not especially concerning himself.

140. Moses indignant at the Golden Calf. [Butts.] *Tempera.*

The figure of Moses occupies more than half the whole space; other figures are given in the lower left-hand corner. A fine specimen.

141. Moses erecting the Brazen Serpent. [Butts.]

High in colour—red, blue, and yellow—especially in the serpents and in the sky. Great in energy and in the conception of the serpents, which flare up into the air, loaded with their burden of human agony. A serpent is twined lax around Moses, dying out before the saving brazen image, and its colours fading into slaty extinction: the brazen one is as horrent and living in aspect as any of the others. The only figures not tormented by the serpents are two maidens, one of whom is in an action of thanksgiving. For this figure Blake probably had in his mind the promise, 'It shall bruise thy head,'—the head of a dead serpent coming just at her feet. Whiffs of flame flit across the sky. A wonderful piece of invention throughout.

142. \*The Stoning of Achan.

The face of the stoned man, an athletic figure, perfectly naked, is turned aside and backwards. The subject *might* be the 'Stoning of the Blasphemer' (Leviticus xxiv. 23), or even of Stephen; but the figure seems less adapted for the latter: and a peculiar detail—a lurid wreath of smoke above his head, mingled with fire—would indicate the 'burning with fire' of all that belonged to Achan. The wrathful bearded Jews stand over him on both sides, six simultaneous arms raised with their weight of stone. Very vigorous in design and contour, tending towards the style of Fuseli.

143. The Burial of Moses: discomfiture of Satan, who 'fought for the body of Moses.'

144. Job confessing his Presumption to God. [Butts.]

An exceedingly grand design, not at all corresponding with any of the Job engravings. The Deity, enwreathed by a very vivid prismatic glory, is the only part of the subject which falls short. From around Him, angels whirl earthward, 'drinking the air of their own speed.' Job kneels in front, his head raised. The three friends and Elihu are all bowed arch-wise prostrate to the ground, Elihu especially having a very beautiful and awful look.

145. Jephthah met by his Daughter. [Butts.]

Companion to No. 48. Fine and impulsive, though indifferently executed. The daughter, a lovely girl, not yet of full

womanly stature, holds up her arms to welcome Jephthah, who stands dumb-founded, his clenched fists meeting as he clutches his robe to rend it. Two girls of her own age, with flutes, and a woman with a tambourine, accompany the daughter.

146. Samson pulling down the Temple. [Butts.] *Tempera.*

Samson occupies almost the entire composition. The only other figure is a boy crouched in the corner, horror-struck at his impending fate: an excellent figure this.

147. \*Goliath cursing David. [Butts.] *Water-colour, with slight pen outline.*

Treated with naïve grotesqueness, and not a good specimen in point of execution, but there is great merit in the calm presence which David maintains as he faces the blustering giant and scans him over. Other armed Israelites are present: Goliath's armour-bearer holds his vast shield, emblazoned with a huge effigy of Dagon.

148. Saul and David.

149. \*The Ghost of Samuel appearing to Saul. [Butts.]

Very effective in design. The Witch of Endor is wonderfully fine. Terrified at the success of her own incantation, she brandishes her gaunt arms as she sits, and her bristling hair bursts into sudden flame. Samuel, very massive in form, and without the mantle over the head, points to the earth, out of which he has been 'disquieted.' Saul, a beardless man, not looking older than thirty or so, is in the style of Fuseli. The heads of his two attendants appear behind.

150. Bathsheba at the Bath seen by David. [Butts.] *Tempera.*

The Bathsheba and the two young girls who immediately attend her are lovely figures; another attendant, a grown woman, is seated on the edge of the tank. David is in the right-hand distance, a very small figure. A beautiful treatment of the subject, full in colour.

151. 'And Joab brought Absalom to the king, and the king kissed Absalom.' [Butts.]

Too glaring in colour, and conventionally heroic in character; yet the Absalom is a glowing image of youthful and princely beauty.

152. The Plague stayed at the Threshing-floor of Araunah the Jebusite. [Butts.] *Tempera.*

A gigantic ancient man represents the Plague; the sky (as very generally in the tempera-pictures) has as much red as blue in it. Remarkably fine.

153. David delivered out of many waters.—Psalm xviii. 16.

154. The Judgment of Solomon. [Butts.] *Oil picture (?) on copper.*

Interesting. Blake surpasses almost all other painters in genuine expression of the subject, by representing the sword-bearing soldier as in no sort of hurry to execute the tentative command of cutting the baby in two.

155. \*The Man of God and Jeroboam. [Butts.]

Has in it the makings of a very fine work, if carried further. Jeroboam's arm has just withered; the golden calf and the altar with a blue-burning flame are picturesque.

156. Susannah and the Elders. [Butts.] *Tempera.*

Fine.

157. Esther in the presence of Ahasuerus. [Butts.] *Tempera.*

Miserably damaged, but has been a picture of very considerable beauty; especially the Esther and her two attendants. Ahasuerus has a glory round his head and a Christ-like type of face; the whole subject, probably, being treated with a symbolic bearing—the Saviour receiving Human Nature into grace.

158. The Angel appearing to Zacharias. [Butts.] *Tempera.*

Rich in colour and accessories, such as the altar-candlestick. The surface is considerably decayed.

159. The Nativity. [Butts.] *Oil picture (?) on copper.*

A most singular treatment of the subject. Mary, swooning in the miraculous childbirth, is sustained by Joseph, while the Divine Infant bounds into the air. Elizabeth holds out her arms to receive Him; the small Baptist, on her knees, joins his hands in prayer. Two oxen are at the manger; the star of the nativity sheds a flood of light. Mary is the most satisfactory figure of the group.

160. 'Simeon was not to see death before he had seen the Christ.' [Butts.]

So marked. The subject is the ordinary one of Simeon prophesying over the Infant Christ; there are several bystanders besides Mary, Joseph, and Anna. Washy, but tolerably complete in colour; a moderate specimen.

161. The Repose in Egypt. [Butts.] *Tempera.*

The Holy Family are within a tent; an angel at its entrance; the donkey outside. Very dark by decay of the surface, and otherwise injured.

162. Christ with the Doctors in the Temple. [Butts.] *Oil picture (?) on copper.*

Has much expression of the subject; the youthful Christ exalted in the centre, the doctors rapt in wonder and meditation.

163. The Baptism of Christ. [Butts.] *Tempera.*

One of Blake's most beautiful landscape-backgrounds. The water, where Christ and the Baptist stand, scarcely bathes their feet, but it recedes into deep broad ripples, beyond which are a wooded beach, mountains, and a blue red-streaked sky. There are several accessory figures, bringing children to be immersed and so on, with a glory of angels in the heavens.

164. The same. [Butts.]

A water-colour high in tint, but not completed, allied to the preceding: a work of imperfect character, but with fine indications. The ripple of the water is peculiarly liquid; the Baptist tends too much to the manner of Westall.

## 165. \*The Transfiguration. [Butts.]

The floating figure of Christ is in the centre: Moses to His right, with clasped hands, and not distinguished by the usual horns of light: Elijah to His left, with joined hands raised, and encircled with flames round the body; his hair and beard ruddy. Behind each saint is an *aged* bearded Angel, winged, and suffused in yellow light, giving great individuality to the conception of the subject. The three Apostles are in the foreground: John with his head buried in his hands, the other two gazing upwards. Fine.

166. The Pool of Bethesda. [Butts.] *Tempera.*

The cripple is obeying the injunction to 'take up his bed and walk;' a good figure. Low in colour, approaching to monochrome.

167. The Raising of Jairus's Daughter. [Butts.] *Tempera.*

The figure of Jesus is exaggerated, especially in the action of command of the extended left arm. Otherwise very fine in the expression of the figures.

## 168. 'But Martha was cumbered about much serving.' [Butts.]

Washy in colour, and, in the details of the table, plates, &c., primitive. The Martha and Mary are pleasing figures; the latter in a posture of *recueillement* upon a couch or ottoman, looking outwards (not up to the Saviour), as more expressive of rapt meditation. Three other guests are seated at the opposite side of the table.

## 169. \*The Raising of Lazarus. [Butts.]

Grand in emotion and point of view. Lazarus floats up at the word of Christ out of a grave dug in the earth. Besides Mary and Martha there are two men on each side of the Saviour.

## 170. \*'Her sins are forgiven, for she loved much.'

The Magdalen is wiping Christ's feet with her hair. Only laid-in in colour: ordinary, yet pleasing.

## 171. \*The Woman taken in Adultery. [Butts.]

Christ bends to the ground in the act of writing: the woman stands with a subdued expression, very naturally given. The Jews are trooping out, all their backs turned. Pale in colour, and not of the highest style of execution.

## 172. Christ Raising the Son of the Widow of Nain. [Butts.]

The young man has almost a feminine aspect. The widow, following the bier, raises her arms: she can scarcely believe her happiness. Somewhat mannered, and without special prominence in any one figure, though the widow is well conceived.

## 173. The Woman touching Christ's Garment. [Butts.]

A composition of many figures, disfigured by lankiness. Not a superior specimen.

174. Christ giving sight to the Blind Man. [Butts.] *Tempera.*

The figure of Christ is fine. The blind man is young, with something of the character of Fuseli's treatment.

175. Christ's Entry into Jerusalem. [Butts.] *Oil picture on copper.*

The upraised hand of Christ appears to indicate not so much blessing or exhortation as a compassionate estimate of the transient enthusiasm which His entry excites. Mary follows among His disciples, her head surrounded with rays: the welcomers are chiefly children, of the mannikin type frequent with Blake. The red sun is setting. The architectural distance seems to aim at a sort of compromise between the typical forms of the Egyptian pyramid and the Gothic steeple, resulting in an unfortunate approach to the Langham Church steeple.

176. 'And when they had sung an hymn they went out into the mount of Olives.'—Mark xiv. 26. [Butts.]

The general treatment recalls the final thanksgiving design of the Job series. A fair specimen, pale in colour.

177. Christ in the Garden, sustained by an Angel. [Butts.] *Oil picture (?) on copper.*

Fine in feeling of the superhuman subject and the dark mournful night.

178. \* 'Judas betrays Him.' [Butts.]

179. 'The King of the Jews.' [Butts.]

A curious and interesting treatment of the Crucifixion, strictly symmetrical. The cross occupies the centre of the composition. At each end of its arms is a man, of a low Jewish type, but quite different in the two, about to nail down the Saviour's hand; while a priest is directly over His head, going to attach the inscription: 'I. N. R. I.' Below, at the sides of the cross, are two corresponding groups of bowed Apostles and women.

180. The Crucifixion. [Butts.]

Christ, the two thieves, and the mocking Jews, form the composition. The Saviour, His head radiating a yellow light, beams down upon the penitent thief, a comely young man, at whom the older impenitent thief glares, as though to browbeat him back into callousness; the Jews point upwards tauntingly: all powerfully expressed. A fine work, not carried to executive completion.

181. 'Christ taking leave of His Mother.' [Butts.]

The crucified Saviour has almost a ghostly look against a very dark sky. Many figures are present; all, except the Virgin and St. John, bowed with hidden faces. The feeling of grief is strongly expressed, and the composition of a high class.

182. The Body of Christ borne to the Tomb. [Butts.] *Tempera.*

An interesting little picture. The body of Christ, with composed, finely chiselled features, is borne on a flat bier by four Apostles, the foremost being no doubt John. Nicodemus, a venerable bearded man, walks midway by the bier, bearing the vase of spices; the Virgin and the two Marias follow. The glimpses of the architecture of Jerusalem have a Gothic character (as introduced by Blake even into the Job series); the three crosses

appear in the distance, under a blue sky streaked with yellow. The whole expression of the subject is serene and sustained, rather than mournful.

183. The Entombment. *Tempera.*

The Saviour, wrapped in a winding-sheet, is laid on the bier. Joseph of Arimathea, the Virgin, and other figures, are grouped around Him, under an oval, as if in the sepulchre, a composition of seventeen figures.

184. The Same. [Butts.]

One of the greatest and most beautiful designs left by Blake : funereal, awful, religious, tender. The figures are mostly in mourning black. John, standing midway on the steps under the arched entrance of the tomb, holds a torch, and hides his weeping face in a fold of his mantle. The Virgin Mother, to his left, is perfect in beauty and the abysmal calm of anguish ; the Magdalen is on the other side. The figure of Christ is singularly corpselike and pure ; Joseph of Arimathea is at His feet. The composition includes nine other figures. There is great harmony of spirit between the treatment of this subject and that of the Angel rolling away the Stone, No. 187.

185. The Sealing of the Stone of Christ's Sepulchre, and setting of the Watch. [Butts.]

Highly interesting (perhaps unique ?) in the particular point of subject chosen, and in other respects an excellent example. A mason is mounted on a ladder, using the trowel and mortar. The head of one Pharisee is extraordinarily fine in its expression of alarmed and vigilant policy. Besides these two figures, there are two other Pharisees and five soldiers.

186. The Resurrection. [Butts.]

187. \*The Angel rolling the Stone from the Sepulchre of Christ [Butts.]

Most spiritual, and with a great impression of silence : noble in light, and the chief angel, seen from the back, with brownish wings, a magnificent figure. Two other angels, who are lifting up the grave-clothes, are also very fine : the Saviour is awaking into life. The light of the picture emanates from Him ; the whole subject standing out upon a dark background of the stone and sepulchre.

188. Christ appearing to the Apostles after the Resurrection. [Butts.] *Tempera.*

A very fine little picture ; the colour, though not deep, well sustained. The figure of Christ is one of the best produced by Blake—majesty and graciousness deepened into pathos. Seven figures are in adoration before Him—all probably Apostles, though one especially might be taken for a woman.

189. Christ overcoming the Incrudulity of St. Thomas. [Butts.] *Tempera.*

Great in the expression of speechless, unspeakable adoration in the other ten Apostles, earth-bowed.

## 190. \*The Ascension. [Butts.]

Christ floats upwards from the view of the eleven Apostles; His back turned, His arms extended. The sense of a perfectly accomplished mission is well conveyed. Two Angels float downwards to the Apostles.

## 191. The Conversion of St. Paul. [Butts.]

## 192. \*Felix and Drusilla—'Felix trembled.' [Butts.]

The Felix and Drusilla, awe-struck, with upraised hands, are very fine; she seeming to bow down in soul, with womanly faith; very bright and tender. Paul, an energetic figure, with handsome, straight-featured countenance, points right upward with his chained arms. Behind him are the gaoler and four soldiers, all impressed, and forming a fine group. The colour tolerably high in tint, but washy.

## 193. St. Paul shaking off the Viper. [Butts.]

The group is not a noticeable one for Blake; but there is a fine indication of sea in the background.

## 194. The same. [Butts.]

Somewhat better than the preceding. The primitive astonishment of the islanders is well expressed; the viper is variegated with deep rich tints.

## 195. The Seven Golden Candlesticks. [Butts.]

## 196. \*'And the angel which I saw lifted up his hand to heaven.' [Butts.]

Described in the Sale-catalogue as 'very fine.'

## 197. 'The Devil is come down.' [Butts.]

Described in the Sale-catalogue as a fine, characteristic example of Blake's vigour and talent.

## 198. 'He cast him into the bottomless pit.' [Butts.]

Described in the Sale-catalogue as 'very powerful and characteristic.'

## 199. Scene from the Apocalyptic Vision. [Butts.]

Described in the Sale-catalogue as 'of grand conception, and highly characteristic.'

## 200. Death on the Pale Horse—'And power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations.' [Butts.]

Death is represented as an aged man. Colour strong.

## 201. 'The number of the Beast is 666.' [Butts.]

Described in the Sale-catalogue as 'of the same characteristic merit.'

202. Eve. *Pen-drawing, coloured.*

Lying in a trance: the serpent crawling over her body and licking her face. Fine.

203. Satan exulting over Eve. [Butts.] *Tempera.*

Eve, a beautiful, gorgeous woman, lies prone in front, close involved in the folds of the serpent. Satan, with shield and

spear, swoops over her, a solid mass of tongued flame behind him. Very fine. .

204. \*The Devil Rebuked. Burial of Moses. [Butts.] *Water-colour, with pen-outline.*

The corpse of Moses, as ancient-looking as Cronos, and the mere shell of the inspired legislator, is exceedingly fine. It lies in a lax curve within the winding-sheet, which four angels are lowering into the earth. Michael is rebuking Satan in the sky; the devil being of the athletic anatomical class, less Blakeian than usual. The colour is not carried far, but complete enough in effect.

205. 'Thou wast perfect till iniquity was found in thee.'—Ezek. xxviii. 15. [Butts.]

A gorgeous six-winged cherub, in a blue day-sky, starlit. He holds an orb and sceptre, and is accompanied by a number of small, fairy-like angels. Bright in colour and extremely grand: the wings nobly managed.

206. The Virgin and Child. *Tempera.*

The Virgin is a half-figure. A quaint, mystic, Byzantine-looking little picture, impressive in its way. Gold is used in it. The colour has darkened considerably.

207. The Holy Family. [Butts.]

Elizabeth, the Baptist, and angels, are present along with Jesus and His parents. The whole basis of the subject is too unrealistic to allow of its possessing much interest: the colour is pale.

208. The same. [Butts.] *Tempera.*

The Virgin, seated, holds the Infant Christ on her knee. Joseph and Anna sit beside her; the Infant Baptist, with a lamb, lies on the ground before them. On each side is an angel, hands clasped, head bowed; another behind, with outstretched wings. Very pure in feeling, religious, and poetic.

209. The Holy Family, with John the Baptist and a Lamb.

210. The Virgin hushing the young Baptist, who approaches the sleeping Infant Christ. [Butts.] *Tempera.*

The Baptist holds a butterfly: his face glows with eagerness to show his prize. Both he and the Infant Christ are naked. Mary has a very winning and attractive air, nicely balanced between the virginal and maternal characters. A red curtain, not harmonious in colour, forms the chief background object. Altogether, the picture is an extremely pretty one.

211. \*The Virgin and Child in Egypt. [Butts.] *Tempera.*

Bust: front face. The Pyramids appear in the background. Very careful and pleasing.

212. The Infant Christ riding a Lamb. [Butts.] *Tempera.*

The Virgin, walking behind, holds Christ on the back of the lamb, which follows the young St. John, who is feeding it. A very sweet idea, expressed with refinement.



213. The Child Christ asleep upon a wooden Cross laid on the Ground. [Butts.] *Tempera*.

The Virgin is standing by, in contemplation. Fine.

214. Similar subject. [Butts.] *Tempera*.

The Virgin, with an expression of inspired foreboding, is beautiful. Joseph is also present, using a pair of compasses.

215. Similar subject. [Butts.] *Tempera*.

A different and equally good composition, without Joseph.

216. The Infant Jesus saying His prayers—'And the Child grew and waxed strong.' [Butts.]

Very radiant, and like a child's dream; the colour slight, but bright. Jesus kneels upon His bed to pray; angels are all round the head and foot of the bed, with Mary and Joseph behind, and two other angels floating above.

217. Christ in the Lap of Truth, and between his Earthly Parents. *Oil-picture*.

The interesting and characteristic, though not salient, picture which was rather concealed than displayed at the International Exhibition of 1862.

218. The Humility of the Saviour. [Butts.]

He is represented as a youth some thirteen years of age, holding a compass and a carpenter's square; a light plays round His head. Joseph, a handsome man of middle age, has no supernatural light, whereas the Virgin is surrounded by a vivid illumination. A dark sky is seen through the rafters of the shed. A moderate specimen.

219. The Covenant. [Butts.]

Described in the Sale-catalogue as 'very fine.'

220. The Assumption of the Virgin. [Butts.]

Described in the Sale-catalogue as an elaborate and exquisitely finished work in Blake's finest manner. The Virgin is received by her Divine Son.

221. 'Mercy and Truth are met together; Righteousness and Peace have kissed each other.' [Butts.]

The personified Virtues are represented in two figures (not four). Jesus (it would appear) is the representative of Mercy and Righteousness: Truth and Peace are embodied in a beardless youth. The two are seated, and turn round to kiss and embrace, their arms meeting over a Greek cross. Above, at the summit of some steps, is an aged man with a book, no doubt representing the Deity; He is surrounded by a glory of angels. An interesting work, yellow being the predominant tint.

222. 'The King of the Jews.' [Butts.]

A symbolic figure of Christ, standing nearly unrobed, with the reed and the crown of thorns. There are great pathos and majesty in the countenance; though the executive treatment, high and crude in colour, is not satisfactory.

223. The Saviour in the Heavens, with floating Figures of Children and Angels. [Butts.] *Tempera*.

May be assumed to represent Christ as the centre and hope of humanity—an anticipation of the 'Christus Consolator' popularised by Scheffer : or perhaps (as expressed by Blake, p. 262, Vol. I.) 'Eternal Creation flowing from the Divine Humanity in Jesus.' Curious.

224. \*An Allegory of the Spiritual Condition of Man. [Butts.] *Tempera*.

The conception of the subject seems to approach to that of a Last Judgment, though not recognisable distinctly as such. Faith, Hope, and Charity, Adam and Eve, Satan, can be traced among the figures. This is one of Blake's largest works, some 5½ feet by 4 feet in dimensions ; interesting, and fine in several of the figures, which stand nearly isolated one from the other here and there throughout the picture.

225. Christ the Mediator. [Butts.] *Tempera*.

He is interceding with the Father, represented as an aged man seated in kingly state, on behalf of a youthful woman, who is surrounded by angels. Somewhat wanting in purity of colour.

226. \*A Head of Christ in Glory. [Butts.] *Tempera*.

Life-sized : a curious effort. Much patience has been expended upon the dress, which is executed all over in a ribbed texture.

- 226A \*The Redemption.

227. The Fall of the Damned.

228. \*Judgment. *Colour-printed*.

Presumed to be a 'Last Judgment ;' or, possibly, the 'Judgment of Paris,' No. 108 (?)

229. \*Hervey's Meditations—a practical epitome. [Butts.]

A compartmented arrangement, not unlike that which Blake applied more than once to the 'Last Judgment.' Admirable in art, and in spiritual impression.

#### D.—POETIC AND MISCELLANEOUS.

230. EIGHT DESIGNS from 'Comus.' [Butts.]

A delicate, quiet series, of small size, in pale colour, and a simple, chaste, not elaborate style of form and execution. The backgrounds are tender and suggestive.

- (a) Comus with his Revellers.

Starlight. Comus holds the enchanting cup : his companion revellers have the heads of a pig, a dog, a bull, and (apparently) a parrot. The lady is reclined upon a bank in front.

- (b) Comus, disguised as a Rustic, addressing the Lady in the Wood.

The lady, slim and erect in form, is a charming figure : the Guardian Spirit hovers near her. The wood is represented with upright sturdy trunks, unbroken by lower leafage.

- (c) The Brothers, as described by Comus, plucking Grapes.

A fine background of thick trees, and a sky indicative of approaching night, with a yoke of oxen, and the Guardian Spirit in a lozenge-shaped glory.

- (d) The two Brothers passing the Night in the Wood.

Each holds his drawn sword, and is stationed between two trees; betwixt them stands the Guardian Spirit, under the aspect of a shepherd. The moon, in her dragon-drawn car, is above. Fine in simple, ideal feeling.

- (e) Comus, with the Lady spell-bound in the Chair.

The lady's enchanted motionlessness is well expressed. Several of the monstrous revellers are at table—a cat, an elephant, a lion, a pig, a long-billed bird. A serpent is flying about; a grotesque attendant, halfway between a Chinaman and an ape, stands near the lady. Quaint and sprightly in expression.

- (f) The Brothers driving out Comus.

Comus decamps, with the smile still on his lips; flames burst forth at his feet; phantom heads loom above. The action of the brothers is lithe and impulsive.

- (g) Sabrina disenchanting the Lady.

A rainbow arches over the nymph; the rayed light is rising through a gap in the hills.

- (h) The Lady restored to her Parents.

A very graceful figure of the lady. The Guardian Spirit resumes his angelic shape, and hovers off; the brothers gaze upon him. A sweet effect of the sun rising over the hills, with trees close to the figures.

EIGHT DESIGNS from 'Comus.'—Another set.

Essentially like the foregoing, but larger, and different in detail. The items *a*, *c*, *d*, *e*, and *f*, offer important variations.

231. TWELVE ILLUSTRATIONS to the 'Allegro' and 'Penseroso.' [Butts.]

A very pretty and interesting series, of small dimensions, in which Blake's turn for personifying and idealising comes out as strong as in the 'Prophetic Books,' but divested of terror, and, of course, following the main lines traced by the poet. Each design is accompanied by a slip of Blake's handwriting, giving the extract from the poem and his own analysis of the design: the latter will be subjoined here in inverted commas. The colour generally is very Blakeian—bright, light, and many-tinted: it may be called 'variegated' colour, like that of a pale tulip.

- (a) *From the 'Allegro':*—Mirth and her Companions—'Jest and Youthful Jollity,' &c., &c.

'These personifications are all brought together in the first design, surrounding the principal figure, which is Mirth herself.' She is much larger than the other figures. Fair. This has been engraved by Blake.

## (b) The Lark startling Night.

'The lark is an angel on the wing. "Dull Night" starts from "his watch tower" on a cloud. The Dawn, with her dappled horses, arises above the Earth. The Earth beneath awakes at the lark's voice.' Very pleasing in the effect of the retreating night-sky, with some big scattered stars.

## (c) 'Sometimes walking, not unseen,' &amp;c., &amp;c.—The Ploughman, Milkmaid, Mower, Shepherd under hawthorn.

'The "great sun" is represented clothed in flames, surrounded by the clouds in their "liveries," in their various offices at the eastern gate. Beneath, in small figures, Milton "walking by elms on hillocks green"; the ploughman, the milkmaid, the mower whetting his scythe, and the shepherd and his lass "under a hawthorn in the dale."' The crimson-tipped flames round Phœbus in the sun-disc gather like heavy locks of hair. The lower section of the design forms a very small and pretty landscape-composition.

## d The Village Holiday—

'Sometimes with secure delight,  
The upland hamlets will invite,' &c.

'In this design is introduced—

"Mountains on whose barren breast  
The labouring clouds do often rest."

'Mountains, clouds, rivers, trees, appear humanized on the "sunshine holiday." The church steeple, with its merry bells. The clouds arise from the bosoms of mountains, while two angels sound their trumpets in the heavens, to announce the "sunshine holiday."' The lower part of the design, with a dance round the maypole and a background of trees, is very sweet in feeling. Throughout there is much pretty Springlike colour.

## (e) The Fireside Stories of Mab, Robin Goodfellow, &amp;c.

'The Goblin, "crop-full, flings out of doors" from his laborious task, dropping his flail and creambowl, yawning and stretching; vanishes into the sky, in which is seen Queen Mab, eating "the junkets." The sports of the fairies are seen through the cottage, where "*she*" lies in bed, pinched and pulled by fairies, as they dance on the bed, the ceiling, and the floor; and a ghost pulls the bed-clothes at her feet. "*He*" is seen following the "friar's lantern" towards the convent.' The Goblin is represented as a giant; his diaphanous body takes the dusky tinges of the dawn-twilight sky.

## (f) 'There let Hymen oft appear,' &amp;c. Marriage-pomp and Drama.

'The youthful poet, sleeping on a bank by the "haunted stream," by sunset, sees in his dream the more bright sun of Imagination under the auspices of Shakespeare and Jonson, in which is Hymen at a marriage, and the "antique pageantry" attending it.' Extremely charming in colour; youth-like and mellow both. The 'haunted stream' has an incident to itself, seen below on a small scale:—two women huddling upright at

the sight of three female ghosts of pained aspect, hovering over the stream.

- (g) *From the 'Penseroso':*—Melancholy, Peace, Contemplation, &c.

Headed 'Melancholy—Penseroso.' 'These personifications are all brought together in this design, surrounding the principal figure, who is Melancholy herself.' A refined design, the colour delicately in sympathy with the pensive tenderness of the poem.

- (h) The Moon and the Curfew.

'Milton, in his character of a student at Cambridge, sees the moon terrified as one "led astray," in the midst of her path through heaven. The distant steeple seen across a wide water indicates the sound of the curfew-bell.' The moon is personified as Diana; the stars grow on stems, like flowers.

- (i) Astronomy and Speculation—'The Spirit of Plato.'

'The spirit of Plato unfolds his worlds to Milton in contemplation. The Three Destinies sit on the circles of Plato's heavens, weaving the thread of mortal life: these heavens are Venus, Jupiter, and Mars. "Hermes" flies before, as attending on the heaven of Jupiter. The Great Bear is seen in the sky beneath Hermes, and the spirits of Fire, Air, Water, and Earth, surround Milton's chair.' In the heaven of Venus are portrayed the Fall of Man and the Expulsion from Eden.

- (j) The retirement to

'twilight groves,  
And shadows brown that Sylvan loves.'

'Milton, led by Melancholy into the groves away from the sun's "flaring beams," who is seen in the heavens, throwing his darts and flames of fire. The spirits of the trees, on each side, are seen under the domination of insects raised by the sun's heat.' The 'insects' are 'spiritual forms' of insects—fairy-like creatures. The sun is very vivid; the colouring 'marbled,' as it were, with pinks, blacks, and yellows. This is altogether one of the most memorable designs of the series.

- (k) The Mid-day Dream by the Brook-side.

'Milton sleeping on a bank; Sleep descending, with a "strange, mysterious dream," upon his wings, of scrolls, and nets, and webs, unfolded by spirits in the air and in the brook. Around Milton are six spirits or fairies, hovering on the air, with instruments of music.' Fine.

- (l) An old Age of Wisdom and Insight spent in a Hermitage.

'Milton, in his old age, sitting in his "mossy cell," contemplating the constellations, surrounded by the spirits of the herbs and flowers, bursts forth into a rapturous prophetic strain.' A very fine and spiritual design, possibly the best of the series. The 'spirits of the herbs and flowers' are charmingly personified. The aged Milton is a noble image of an inspired sage: it will be observed that Blake, following the poet's aspiration for his old age, takes no count of his actual blindness.

232. \*The Expulsion of the Rebel Angels. *Oil painting (?) on copper.*  
Oval-shaped.

A most carefully-painted work : the colour deep and full. The rebel angels are falling, pursued by an archangel : below, the globe of hell opens to receive them. Satan has already dropped upon the burning marl in the centre of the globe. The figures are about forty in number.

233. \*Satan calling up his Legions. *Tempera.*

The same subject as No. 51, but a different composition ; also exceedingly fine.

234. \*Satan at the Gate of Hell, guarded by Sin and Death.

May presumably have belonged at first to the set of Nine Designs from 'Paradise Lost,' No. 90.

235. \*The Characters in Spenser's 'Faery Queen.' [Lord Leconfield.]

The figures are brought together as in procession. Done as a companion to the 'Canterbury Pilgrimage,' but not so elaborate, correct, or exhaustive ; fine nevertheless, though archaic and singular. The Red-cross Knight with the dragon, Una with the lion, Talus, can be readily identified. In the sky are some allegoric figures, and in the background a Gothic cathedral and other buildings. Eighty guineas, a large sum in Blake's case, was given to Mrs. Blake by Lord Egremont for this picture, now considerably clouded over by its varnish. See p. 409 Vol. I.

236. Robinson Crusoe.

A visionary effect of colour, like a transparency. Fine.

237. 'But Hope re-kindled, only to illumine

The shades of death, and light her to the tomb.'

*Tinted water-colour.*

See pp. 271-2, Vol. I.

238. TWENTY-EIGHT DESIGNS from the 'Pilgrim's Progress.' *Water-colours, often unfinished ; one or two little beyond pencil-sketches.*

These are rather small designs, having quite a sufficient measure of Blake's spirit in them, but much injured by the handiwork of Mrs. Blake, the colour being untidy-looking and heavy, for the most part ; crude where strength is intended. Two of the designs, at any rate, may be considered untouched by Mrs. Blake.

- (a) Christian terrified in reading the Book.

He is bowed under his burden, and, as Bunyan represents him, in rags. Angry skirts of flame lour through a heavy-clouded sky. Valuable in invention, and one of the most finished of the series.

- (b) Christian leaving the City of Destruction.

He runs, almost crushed under the burden. The subject is powerfully felt.

- (c) Evangelist directing Christian on his Road.

One of the most finished of the series.

- (*d*) The Slough of Despond.  
 Pliable is turning backward to the City of Destruction. Fair.
- (*e*) Help lifting Christian out of the Slough.  
 One of the finest. The background, with a crimson setting sun, is grandly conceived.
- (*f*) Worldly Wiseman directing Christian to Sinai.  
 An able design, with fine points of effect.
- (*g*) Christian at Sinai.  
 The flames crudely coloured.
- (*h*) Evangelist raising up Christian, prostrate at Sinai.  
 Dignified in design.
- (*i*) Christian knocking at the Wicket-gate.  
 The gate, of Gothic form, bears the inscription, 'Knock, and it shall be opened.' The glimpse of landscape is impressive.
- (*j*) Christian and the Interpreter, with the Man fallen from Grace in the Iron Cage. *Half executed.*
- (*k*) Christian and the Interpreter, with the Man waking from a Dream of the Last Judgment.
- (*l*) Christian before the Crucifix, his Burden falling off.  
 One of the most finished and inventive in design. A trailing vine is prominently introduced.
- (*m*) The Three Shining Ones saluting Christian at the Cross.
- (*n*) Christian sleeping in the Arbour.  
 This appears to be the subject. A couched lion is arbitrarily introduced, with some separate incidents behind.
- (*o*) Christian ascending the Hill Difficulty.  
 Christian's 'filthy rags' are now exchanged for the 'broidered coat.'
- (*p*) Christian passing the Lion-guarded Entrance to the Palace Beautiful.  
 Fine.
- (*q*) Christian fighting with Apollyon.  
 Powerful.
- (*r*) Christian beset by Demons in the Valley of the Shadow of Death.  
 This appears to be the subject, though it looks as much like the First Temptation of Christ in the Wilderness—'Command that these stones shall be made bread.' Besides the chief fiend, there are other demon-heads appearing along a sort of flight of steps.
- (*s*) Faithful narrating his Experiences to Christian. *Only begun.*  
 Besides the two pilgrims, two visionary discs representing the events narrated by Faithful are given.
- (*t*) Vanity Fair. *Half-colour.*  
 A harlequin is playing his antics, among other figures.

- (u) The Soul of Faithful ascending in the Fiery Chariot.  
*Half-colour.*

Fine in conception.

- (v) Giant Despair locking Christian and Hopeful in Prison.

- (w) Christian and Hopeful escaping from Prison. *Unfinished.*

Other figures appear inside the prison—a point not expressed by Bunyan, save in the Second Part of the 'Pilgrim's Progress.'

- (x) Giant Despair baffled by their Escape. *Unfinished.*

- (y) Christian and Hopeful, with the Shepherds of the Delectable Mountains. *Unfinished.*

- (z) The Shining Ones in Beulah.

But that the faces are mauled by Mrs. Blake, the tender rainbow hues of this design would make it a charming one.

- (a<sup>1</sup>) Christian sinking in the River of Death. *Pencil-sketch, almost colourless.*

- (b<sup>1</sup>) Christian returning Home.

So marked: interesting in invention. Christian, who here appears again with the burden on his shoulders, is received by God, surrounded by a glory of angels in the form of a pointed arch.

239. \*The Pilgrimage of Christiana.

A separate subject, not belonging to the preceding series.

240. Oberon, Titania, and Puck, with Fairies dancing.

Fine. Oberon is a kingly, crowned figure; Titania sweet and graceful; Puck has a capital face, full of mischief, yet very unlike the ordinary conception. The clasped arms and hands of the fairy ring present a highly dance-like action; the accepted idea of fairies is adhered to, and expressed in very true keeping; they are not, however, of diminutive size.

241. Oberon and Titania on a Lily. *Tinted.*

Exhibited in Manchester in 1857. See pp. 2-3, Vol. I.

242. Seven Heads, or Groups of Heads from Shakespeare:—Lear and Cordelia; the same (?); Lear (?); Juliet with the sleeping Draught; Macbeth and his Wife; Othello and Desdemona; Falstaff and Prince Hal. [Butts.]

These small heads are no doubt early works, neat and vapid in manner, and far from satisfactory in character. The Juliet is perhaps the best.

243. A Picture from Ovid's Metamorphoses. See Vol. I., pp. 346-7.

244. Count Ugolino and his Sons in Prison. *Tempera.*

Somewhat similar to the subject in the 'Gates of Paradise.'

245. The River of Life. [Butts.]

A fine and very captivating specimen, exquisitely composed, and moderately complete in execution. A mother and two children, admirably in motion, are launched upon the blue river, whose current flows smooth and rapid: at the sides are



two figures with flutes ; on the banks, houses and trees ; and in the central heaven a golden sun and a male figure darting downward. A second female figure on the river, coming forward against the current, seems to be vainly endeavouring to stem it.

246. *Letho Similis.*

A design for a monument : the female figure (lying upon a tomb inscribed as in the title), pure and graceful, more like Flaxman's style of form than Blake's, and tinted to represent marble. She appears to symbolise the hope of immortality in the slumber of death, realising the conception of the words 'She is not dead, but sleepeth.' The rest of the design, flowers and foliage treated in a simple, naturalistic manner, seems certainly not to have been the handiwork of Blake ; indeed the authorship of the entire work may be questioned. This design is in the British Museum.

247. *Tithonus and Aurora. Body-colour.*

The title suggested *may* be correct.

248. \*'And Pity, like a naked, new-born babe  
Striding the blast, or Heaven's Cherubim horsed  
Upon the sightless couriers of the air.'—MACBETH.

*Colour-printed.*

Blake does not seem to have had any particular idea to express in this design, but to have taken the words of the quotation and let them carry him as far as they could. We have accordingly a naked child borne off by two supernatural figures riding blind horses through the air : a woman, apparently the newly-delivered mother of the child, lies in front, dead or tranced, her blue eyes open, but with no 'speculation,' her hands clasped below the uncovered bosom ; a grand figure, at once beautiful and terrible. The unearthly strangeness and impetuosity of the upper group maintain the great quality of this design, which is moreover a very fine piece of colour, the green of the grassy earth and the slaty purple of the twilight sky telling for a good deal in its general effect.

249. *Age teaching Youth.*

Youth is personified in a male and a female figure, seated on the grass ; the former is in a dress of various bright colours. Pleasing.

250. *An Old Man and a Woman in contemplative Adoration amid Trees.*

Unfinished ; dignified in character. A ray of colourless light comes towards the figures.

251. *Churchyard Spectres frightening a Schoolboy.*

Only half executed, but exceedingly strong in conception of the subject. One of the spectres is a howling old woman, who bursts out upon the schoolboy, hovering close to a tombstone. Another stands in the opening of the gabled church-door ; an old Hebraic pedagogic man, who points to his fellow-spectre and holds a flaming birch-rod. A break in the clouds shows the blue of the night-sky and two big stars.

252. 'The Lord hath broken the staff of the wicked.'

The subject is a pope, escorted through hell by a demon or avenging angel, and witnessing the punishment of kings and barons sunk in a fiery swamp. These figures are admirable. The pope, manacled, turns backward to stare at a naked man tumbling through the air, entwined by a serpent. Very horrid in conception.

253. The same. *Water colour, with slight pen outline.*

A smaller design, similar to the preceding. The background is black; the colouring bad—perhaps the handiwork of Mrs. Blake.

254. \*Plague.

A fine duplicate of No. 55, a good deal neater in handling and with more points of 'classic' treatment.

255. Designs from English History—A series.

An early work. Three subjects from this series were exhibited in the collection at the Burlington Club, 1876.

256. A Recumbent Figure, hovered over by Angels.

Delicate in glow of colour: the composition very characteristic and spiritual.

257. Hecate. [Butts.] *Colour-printed.*

The triple Hecate is crouched to the right; three separate figures, close together, exceedingly grand. To the left appears a donkey browsing, with an owl and a crocodilean head: an elfin bat flits over the Hecate figures. Executed with great depth and completeness of effect, and altogether not to be surpassed in Blake's special range of power. The National Gallery in Edinburgh possesses a duplicate.

258. Exodus, chap. xxix. 20. 'And the Cherubims shall stretch forth their wings on high.'

So marked, but the subject does not correspond with the quotation. It represents a dead lord in the tomb, in perfect calm, with two praying angels above, their wing-tips meeting; they float upward from his head and feet. Finely expressed in subject; the execution, slight in colour, is not of Blake's highest quality.

259. A Husband parting from his Wife and Child—Two Assassins lurking in Ambush.

Beautiful in tone and sentiment; the young wife especially tender and gentle. The full moon shines over a lake. One of the assassins is a woman of the lowest animal type, yet without any aspect of peculiar ferocity; she holds two daggers.

260. The Accusers of Theft, Adultery, and Murder. *Colour-printed.*

A coloured version of the design partially engraved (from a steel plate) on p. 304, Vol. I: the middle figure in dark plate-armor. Very grand.

261. An Aged Man addressing a Multitude. *Colour-printed.*

He stands under a tree, speaking in command or exhortation : the listeners seem to be despondent, as under some national calamity. Good, without extravagance of form or colour. Accurately and fully executed in strong, bright tints.

262. Misfortune and Happiness (?). *Colour-printed.*

A mourning woman crouches under a drooping, blasted tree-trunk. In front of her stands a beautiful naked young woman, tossing and kissing her naked child ; a charmingly designed group. A little red bird flying to the right, relieved upon a background of densest cloud, deserves notice for the daringly simple way in which it is executed. Richly coloured in masses, with little or no subsequent re-touching.

263. Three Figures struggling in the Air.

264. 'Arise, O Rintrah,' &c., design for a Prophetic Book. [Linnell.]

265. The Dream.

266. \*The Spiritual Form of Napoleon. *Tempera.*

A very powerful example of effect, and otherwise impressive. In the same style as the Nelson and Pitt, Nos. 94, 95.

267. Satan showing the Pope his Destiny in Hell. *Colour-printed.*

See No. 252, the subject-matter of which is akin to this.

## LIST No. 2.

## UNCOLOURED WORKS.

*Including Drawings in Indian Ink, or with merely slight Washes of Colour.*

\* Means considerable size. The Works not otherwise defined are known or assumed to be Pencil-drawings.

## SECTION A.—DATED WORKS.

ARRANGED IN ORDER OF DATE.

1. 1778 (?).—Sketch for the ‘Jane Shore.’

Neat and rather ordinary in style, not quite unlike Retzsch, but with fair merit on inspection. The spectators of Jane’s penance are good in expression. See No. 1, List 1.

2. Circa 1791 (?).—A Naked Man, touching a Ram as he recedes.

Daringly designed. At the back Blake has written, in title-page form, ‘The Bible of Hell, in Nocturnal Visions collected. Vol. I. Lambeth.’ This will be understood by the readers of ‘The Marriage of Heaven and Hell.’

3. 1793.—Ugolino.

In outline; a preparation for the design in the ‘Gates of Paradise.’

4. 1793.—A Visionary Head (?).

Apparently a man of Blake’s own time. On the back of the preceding.

5. 1794.—The Death of Ezekiel’s Wife. *Indian ink.*

The original design for the very finished plate referred to on p. 133, Vol. I. The prophet has a fine bearded head, different in type from that assigned by Blake to Job. There are three crouching friends, one of them a woman. A good average specimen.

6. 1796 (?).—\*Job and his Friends—'What is man that Thou shouldst try him every moment?' *Indian ink.*

The plate from this design is described on p. 133, Vol. I. In outline; rather empty in manner. The friends are somewhat deficient in distinctive character.

7. 1797.—Designs in an unpublished Prophetic Book, named 'Vala, or the Death and Judgment of the Ancient Man: a Dream of Nine Nights; by William Blake.' [Linnell.]

There are a good number of designs, some thirty or forty, interspersed through this MS. as in the printed 'Prophetic Books,' and of the same general character; but, whether through the want of the vigorous effects obtained in the engraving process, or through real inferiority, they fall short of the printed ones in impressiveness. A design of a hooded snake with a woman's face is curious.

8. 1797.—Jacob and the Angel.

One of the designs to Young's 'Night Thoughts': outline. On the back is a rough suggestion for a design of the Transfiguration.

9. 1800.—'The Head-piece of 'Little Tom the Sailor.'

Done in a neat unimpulsive style, not nearly so effective as in the engraving.

10. 1802 (?). — Sketch for a Frontispiece to Young's 'Night Thoughts' (?). *Pencil outline, partly gone over with ink.*

A figure which seems to be that of a poet in contemplation, and which is not unlike the type adopted for the figure of Young in the illustrated 'Night Thoughts,' appears at the foot of the composition; the chariot of the sun at the summit, and some night-like symbols next below. Curious.

11. 1802.—Design for Hayley's 'Ballad of the Eagle.'

On the back of the preceding; this is unfortunately cut in half lengthways. It is handled with considerable care, and differs throughout in the details from the engraved design, though there is no mistaking the connexion of the two. An Indian-ink drawing of the same subject is also extant.

12. 1805.—Christ descending into the Tomb.

Slight in handling: a first sketch for the illustration to Blair's 'Grave.'

13. 1805 (?).—A Soul at the Door of Paradise (?). *Indian ink.*

Slight in execution and ordinary in design; probably intended for Blair's 'Grave.' The soul is a female figure, and two female angels stand within the door.

14. 1805.—The Old Man at Death's Door.

Sketched on the back of the preceding. A preparatory design for the subject in Blair's 'Grave.'

15. 1805.—The Death of a Voluptuary. *Indian ink.*

Interesting as being a close parallel in design, but not in character, to that of 'The Soul hovering over the Body,' engraved in the 'Grave;' not at all like the engraved 'Death of the Strong Wicked Man.' The dead voluptuary is crowned with

vine-leaves ; his soul, a female figure expressive of coarse passions, contemplates him with repulsion. Scratchy and rather ugly in execution.

16. 1805.—A young Man entering Death's Door. *Indian ink.*

Probably a preparatory version of 'The Soul exploring the Recesses of the Grave.'

17. 1805.—A Design originally intended for Blair's 'Grave.'—'The Soul exploring the Recesses of the Grave (?).' *Slightly washed with Indian ink.*

A figure in an ascending action at the summit of a monument, with another below precipitated into the dark void. Somewhat *outré*, and not the same composition as in the engraving.

18. 1805.—The Death of the Strong Wicked Man—Blair's 'Grave.'

A very slovenly sketch of the principal figure in the engraved design, along with the Soul, which is here more in the attitude adopted in the engraving for 'The Soul hovering over the Body.' See No. 15, and p. 269, Vol. I.

19. 1805.—The Ascension of the beatified Soul (?).

On the back of the preceding. The figure assumed to represent the soul is rising into the air from amid several other figures, and about to ascend through a pointed arched window. Very slight.

20. 1805.—Plague.

An expressive and reasonably careful sketch for the grand water-colour No. 61, List I, engraved Chap. VII., Vol. I.

21. Circa 1805 (?).—'Let loose the Dogs of War.' See p. 55, Vol. I.

A savage cheering on hounds, who seize a man by the throat. Very fine. Evidently connected with a design engraved in Young's 'Night Thoughts,' though by no means identical with it.

22. 1806.—\*Sketch for the Design of the Dedication to Blair's 'Grave.'

Rather slight, but the intention fully expressed. A sketch for No. 78, List I.

23. 1806 (?).—\*'For the Grave.'

So marked (not in Blake's handwriting). A sketchy beginning of a very elaborate composition. It may be conjectured to represent the Human Spirit and Life in various conditions. The central point is a number of figures floating round a tree (the Tree of Life, or of the Knowledge of Good and Evil?); other figures are dragging their fellows along, or being dragged, falling, praying, and so on. Like the following two, interesting and full of matter.

24. 1807.—\*'The Last Judgment.

A most elaborately planned treatment of the subject, crowded with figures, neatly and distinctly drawn : corresponding (at all events, in various points) with the composition described in the 'Vision of the Last Judgment,' p. 181; not like the one in Blair's 'Grave.' Christ appears at the summit; before Him,

Adam and Eve, standing ; at the bottom, the Devil, triple-headed ; to Christ's right, the Just ascending ; to His left, the Condemned cast downwards. Marked 'The Original Drawing of Blake's Last Judgment.' Very interesting. Now in the possession of Dr. Aspland.

25. 1807.—\*The same.

A tracing from a completer version of the preceding design ; the whole scheme of the subject being more fully shown, the number of figures still greater. Inscribed by Mr. Tatham : 'A tracing of an elaborate drawing of his Last Judgment. The original picture was six feet long and about five wide, and was very much spoiled and darkened by over-work ; and is one of those alluded to in his Catalogue as being spoiled by the spirits of departed artists, or "blotting and blurring demons." This tracing is from some elaborate drawing which has never been engraved.'

26. 1809 or earlier.—The Spirit of Nelson guiding Leviathan, in whose Folds are entangled the Nations of the Earth.

So marked at the back by Blake. Nelson, a naked figure, stands in the middle, with the convolutions of the serpentine Leviathan, and heads and limbs of other human figures therein, rising on each side of him. A hasty and rather slovenly sketch, preparatory, no doubt, to the picture, List I, No. 94, referred to in the Descriptive Catalogue, p. 139, Vol. II.

27. From 1789 to 1811, at least.—THE BOOK OF Sketches and MS. belonging to Mr. Rossetti (see page 88, Vol. I.) contains a number of sketches more or less slight, first thoughts of designs, &c. ; among them the following :—

- (a) A tiger-like animal frightening a man, who escapes out of window : below, another head of the tiger. *Pen and ink.*

The lower head especially, which has a very actual character, and yet looks as if it might have been a 'vision,' is capital.

- (b) Various sketches of a frightful gigantic old man devouring a human being.

Perhaps Lucifer with Judas, from Dante's 'Hell' ; but not corresponding with the design in the Dante series.

- (c) 1810 (?).—The Portrait of Blake engraved at Chap. XXXIV., Vol. I.

On the same page is this curious entry : '23 May, 1810, found the Word golden.'—Does 'the Word' mean 'the Bible' ?

- (d) A Vision of Fear, and a Vision of Hope.

The Fear is two men precipitated through space, in the folds of a serpent : the Hope is most peculiar—merely a view of long human hair from the back of the head, gently waving. Perhaps Blake was thinking of the line,

'And Hope enchanting smiled, and waved her golden hair.'

- (e) 1789, &c. 1793–5.—Several sketches for designs in 'Thel' and other Prophetic Books, and for the 'Gates of Paradise, and 'Elohim creating Adam.' *Pencil, or Indian ink occasionally.*

- (f) Sketches bearing the following titles or mottoes, or of the subjects specified, corresponding in size, shape, &c. to the sketches for the 'Gates of Paradise,' and probably intended at first to belong to that series :—
- (f<sup>1</sup>) 'Are glad when they can find the grave.'  
Engraved on p. 141, Vol. I.
- (g) 'Everything that grows  
Holds in perfection but a little moment.'—SHAKESPEARE.  
An expanded flower, with two elfish habitants, one mounting, the other sinking.
- (h) A Cupid, or Infant, in a cage.
- (i) 'A fairy vision  
Of some gay creatures of the element  
That in the colours-of the rainbow live.'  
Elves sporting in a rainbow.
- (j) 'As Daphne was root-bound.'—MILTON.  
Daphne changing into a laurel-tree.
- (k) 'Murder.'  
An assassin approaching a sleeping man in bed.
- (l) A man about to throw himself off a cliff, held back by the hand of another man.
- (m) 'Yet cannot I persuade me thou art dead.'—MILTON.  
A mother gazing mournfully, yet tranquilly, upon a dead infant in her arms.
- (n) 'Whose changeless brow ne'er smiles nor frowns.'—THOMSON.  
A man chained against a rock ; appears to personify Fate, as the design corresponds with No. 177, so entitled.
28. 1815.—The Laocoön.  
A very careful drawing from the antique group. See Vol. I. p. 297. Also another such drawing, partly worked with the pen.
29. 1815.—Jupiter, and other figures from antique marbles.  
Drawn for the same purpose as the preceding. The glory round the head of the Jupiter is composed of figures.
30. 1819 and 1820.—VISIONARY HEADS. [Linnell.]  
For some account of these most curious and often most characteristic and excellent heads, see pp 300-3, &c. Vol. I. The 'King Saul,' mentioned on p. 302, is not to be found among them.
31. 1819, 18th Oct.—The Builder of the Pyramids, and the Place where Blake saw this Personage.  
The head is engraved Chap. XXVIII., Vol. I.
32. David.  
Young, as he went up against Goliath. Radiant eyes, and a face capable of much, for good or evil. Fine.
33. Uriah, the husband of Bathsheba.  
A heavy, stupid man, with a huge cerebellum and enormous bull-neck.



34. Bathsheba.  
Sweet, soft, yielding, witty.
35. Solomon.  
Age about forty ; a piercing, reflective, sensuous Jewish head, the eye exceedingly far back from the line of the nose, the chin blunt and very large. Admirable.
36. Nebuchadnezzar.  
Vivid, and not wanting in truth to the Assyrian cast of countenance. Below the head is a 'coin' of Nebuchadnezzar, engraved in Varley's 'Zodiacal Physiognomy.'
37. Joseph and Mary, and the Room they were seen in.  
They are both very young—Mary with a good deal of our contemporary 'præ-Raffaelite' character. The 'room they were seen in' is a bedroom, wherein are an elderly man and two children.
38. Socrates.  
Vivid eye, talking mouth.
39. Mahomet.  
Something like Mrs. Blake according to Mr. Linnell : there is a kind of hint too of the semi-nude Dr. Johnson in St. Paul's. The mouth has a grim smilingness in it ; the forehead is very retreating but powerful. Fine.
40. Cassibelane, the British Chief.  
Quite a civilised personage ; as Mr. Linnell says, fit for the head man at Howell and James's.
41. Boadicea.  
A less exaggerated instance of the contour of face seen in the Builder of the Pyramids, Chap. XXVIII., Vol. I. Strong character.
42. Caractacus.  
A most powerful head, with high features, great dark eyes, and compressed forehead, singularly true to the conception of a lordly and vigorous-minded barbarian. There is a curious resemblance, too, to the Caractacus in the fresco which Mr. Watts sent to Westminster Hall, though that is considerably toned down in comparison.
43. Canute.  
Marked 'Dark hair and eyes'—The latter extremely open, and gazing upward ; the jaw heavily rounded, like that of an obese Frenchman. Not one of the best.
44. An Anglo-Norman King.
45. The Empress Maud, Mother to Henry II.  
The remains of a fine woman, but disagreeable ; the nose peaked, the mouth disdainful and supercilious.
46. Queen Eleanor.  
Handsome : not very interesting.

47. 1819, 13th Oct.—Richard Cœur de Lion.

Marked 'Drawn from his spectre, quarter-past twelve, midnight.' Bluntish features, steady, daring gaze: the kind of man to look everything, from the devil upwards, in the face. (A second very slight profile of Cœur de Lion is also in the series.)

48. King John.

A *little* like the accepted head of King John, wonderfully subtle and daring. Seems too noble for this *bête noire* of English history. As a work of art, one of the very finest of the series.

49. Falconbridge, the Bastard.

A thorough fighter, with a bull-head a little like his lion-hearted father.

50. Saladin.

The kind of head that might do for John the Evangelist.

51. Edward I.

Engraved Chap. XXVIII., Vol. I.

52. William Wallace.

Engraved Chap. XXVIII., Vol. I.

53. A Welsh Bard.

54. The Assassin lying dead at the feet of Edward I. in the Holy Land.

A leonine face; almost literally so.

55. Edward III. (?)

A fine bearded head.

56. Edward III. as he exists in the Spiritual World.

Engraved Chap. XXVIII., Vol. I.

57. 1819, 30th Oct.—Wat Tyler.

Marked 'By William Blake, from his spectre, as in the act of striking the Tax-gatherer on the head: 1 hour A.M.' A capital head with stubbly beard, such as would make a good study for an artist's cartoon of the subject.

58. Wat Tyler's Daughter.

A laughing plebeian, with great eyes.

59. Owen Glendower.

A surly, supercilious, unpleasant head, well realised.

60. Hotspur.

A wonderfully vivid image of an audacious fighting man, born to fight, who will gain by dash what he has discovered to be gainable by instantaneous *coup d'œil*.

61. Friar Bacon and the Poet Gray.

So inscribed, but not by Blake. Very slight; on the same piece of paper.

62. 1820, Aug.—Old Parr at the age of Forty.

A perfectly naked figure, aiming probably to represent a man admirably constituted for vital strength and endurance. Carefully drawn, with the short thorax characteristic of Blake's figures.

63. Cancer.

Presumably a man born under the influence of the sign of Cancer. A cantankerous, yet large-minded man, not wholly unlike Benjamin Franklin or Blake himself, but of a highly *outré* type.

64. 'Portrait of a Man who instructed Mr. Blake in Painting, in his Dreams.'

An *outré* oval face, with something of a Mongolian cast, and a very prim, clean-cut mouth.

65. The Ghost of a Flea.

The Flea's mouth open below, not unlike the head engraved p. 303, Vol. I.

66. Five Visionary Heads of Women. [Mrs. Alex. Gilchrist.]

Sketch engraved at p. 298, Vol. I.

67. Other Visionary Heads.

This set does not belong to Mr. Linnell, but has, as yet, remained with the Varley family, and is described by Allan Cunningham, *Lives of the Painters*, Vol. II. pp. 168-170.

68. 'The Egyptian Taskmaster who was killed and buried by Moses.'

A head with a pyramidal facial angle, wearing a skull-cap : something like an early Florentine drawing.

69. 'Saul, King of Israel, somewhat influenced by Evil Spirits.'

On the same sheet of paper as the preceding. A large and massive yet small-featured face, with narrow dazed-looking eyes.

70. Pindar 'as he stood a Conqueror in the Olympic games.'

A large bearded head.

71. Corinna.

Two heads, of rather large dimensions, on the same page. One is marked 'Corinna the Rival of Pindar'; and the other, 'Corinna the Grecian Poetess.' The first is a front-face, the second a profile. Each has the mouth open, with the teeth and tongue visible; large, gleaming, upturned eyes; and a large space between the eyebrow and eyelid. A handsome woman.

72. Socrates.

Not so marked, but there is no mistaking the features : a profile.

73. A Classic Head.

Slightly drawn. Clustering hair suggestive of horns.

74. A Mediæval King.

A crowned head : might be Cœur de Lion.

## 75. King John.

Crowned : the head, from the eyes upwards, extremely contracted : the eyes large and arresting. A handsome and able looking personage, a little grim.

## 76. Henry VIII.

A small, grotesque, babyish head, neatly executed : I think it represents Bluff King Hal. There is the same sort of frontal protuberance as in the "Edward III. as he exists in the Spiritual World" : above this, come crisp flickering hairs, like curls of flame.

## 77. Satan.

A full-fronting face, somewhat resembling William the Conqueror, but more abstract. The head is helmed, with plumes which are formed partly of human figures. This detail suggests that Blake may have intended to express the phrase of Milton regarding Satan—'On his head sat Horror plumed.'

## 78. John Varley.

Marked 'Portrait of J. Varley, by Wm. Blake. Born August 17, 1778, 18. 56 m. † ascending.' A round fleshy face, smooth and sleek, and fairly good-looking.

## 79. A Female Head.

A large outline profile of a handsome young woman, of a sort of Grecian modernised tendency. Resembles the head of 'Gemini' in Varley's 'Zodiacal Physiognomy,' but is less extreme in type.

## 80. Two Heads.

Marked in the margin, but not in Blake's handwriting, 'See Murdoch on Insanity.' One head, about the best of this whole set, might almost be supposed to be a caricature of Fuseli, as shown in Lavater's engraving; the profile coming very prominently forward up to the tip of the nose, and thence receding. The second head is a woman of mature age, of very upright features, nearly in full-face.

## 81. Lois.

A mirthful but rather repellent visage, full-fronting. The outline of the face is excessively egg-shaped : the hair stands curiously away from the outline, curling backwards.

## 82. C. 1820.—A Sketch-book containing various designs.

This book belongs to Mr. W. B. Scott, and has been described in the *Portfolio*, July 1871. It contains a full-length figure of The Ghost of a Flea : the head of this figure is the one which Varley introduced into his 'Zodiacal Physiognomy,' and which is engraved in the present work, Vol. I. p. 303, see also No. 65. Another important design in the Sketch-book is a Visionary Head of the first wife of Milton ; a handsome woman, with very firm and chiselled, yet not masculine, features.

83. 1820.—The Series of Twenty Designs to Phillips's Pastoral. [Linnell.] *Indian ink.*

Delicately executed, with different degrees of finish ; a trifle larger than the woodcuts (see Chap. XXX., Vol. I.), and

occasionally varying slightly from them. The only one which was not engraved represents the two shepherds standing together, with sheep, &c., behind. The engraved frontispiece is not included in this set.

84. 1825.—Achilles.

Marked (presumably by Varley) 'Head of Achilles drawn by William Blake at my request, 1825.' The face is rather like that of Alexander the Great, with a large ear and clustering hair. Slight, but good.

85. 1825.—Job and His Three Daughters.

Slight in execution; the design pretty nearly as in the engraved plate, but without the visionary subjects in the background.

86. 1825-6.—The Six-footed Serpent attacking Agnolo Brunelleschi—Dante.

An interesting sketch for the Dante water-colour, List I, No. 123, x<sup>1</sup>: the central group fine.

87. 1825-6.—Brunelleschi half-transformed by the Serpent—Dante.

Sketch for No. 123 y<sup>1</sup>, List I.

88. 1827.—Six Designs from the Opening of the Book of Genesis. [Linnell.] *Pencil, with tints of colour here and there.*

These were drawn in the year of Blake's death. They show some uncertainty of hand, but not much further change. They are, however, extremely slight. The subjects are—1. a Title-page, with God the Father and Son, the four living creatures used as the Evangelical Symbols, and Adam; 2. Similar subject; 3. The Creator; 4. The Trinity creating Adam; 5. The creation of Eve; 6. God setting the mark upon Cain.

## SECTION B.—UNDATED WORKS.

### ARRANGED ACCORDING TO SUBJECT.

#### C.—BIBLICAL AND SACRED.

89. Eve and the Serpent.

A good design, in slight outline. The serpent is wound round Eve, who appears (as in No. 90 g, List I), to be eating the forbidden fruit out of the tempter's very jaws.

90. God convicting Adam and Eve.

Fine in feeling, spite of extreme slowness.

91. The Death of Abel. *Indian ink.*

Abel lies dead on the ground; Cain, a grand figure, stares upon the corpse, with his hands up to his head. Adam and Eve look on from a distance, clasping each other: they appear scarcely so old as their sons. Perhaps this design is less intended as a direct illustration of the Death of Abel than as an ideal subject of the same class, in affinity with the headpiece to the 'America.'

92. The Deluge: also two other sketches. (*Framed together.*)

93. Abraham preparing to sacrifice Isaac. [Butts.] *Indian ink, with slight traces of colour, and very highly varnished all over into tone.*

They both kneel, Isaac appearing quite reconciled to his doom. A small design, probably early, and much closer to the ordinary artistic type of such works than Blake's wont. As such, agreeably treated.

94. Pestilence—The Death of the Firstborn.

The same subject, but not the same design, as No. 62, List 1. Here a wingless figure flies forward, scattering the pestilence. Below is the Angel protecting the Israelitish house. On the back is an indication of another design of the same subject, also different.

95. Moses staying the Plague. *Pen and ink.*

96. \*Moses receiving the Law. *Indian ink.*

An interesting treatment of the subject, though not noticeable in point of design. Moses, standing erect, extends both arms upwards at full length, in the act of receiving the tablets. Flames are behind him; and a densely dark cloud conceals all, from the lower part of the tablets upwards.

97. \*From Job: 'Every one also gave him a piece of money' (?). *Pencil, slightly touched with Indian ink.*

Quite a different design from the one in the engraved Job Series. The supposed Job and his young wife sit in the middle, with tall female figures approaching from the two sides. God and some cherubs are above. Interesting.

98. The Death of Ezekiel's Wife. *Indian ink.*

A different design from No. 5, less good. Ezekiel has an aspect of more entire resignation; the friends here are four in number.

99. The Prodigal Son.

Extremely slight, but there seems scarcely a doubt of the subject intended. The son rushes up a flight of stairs into the arms of the father, a Christ-like figure, who kneels at the head of the steps; a young girl kneels beside him, and joins in embracing her brother. To the right, two figures stand aside, one holding a very prominent pair of keys. Interesting in conception, and impulsive in action, spite of its slightness.

100. The Parable of the Sower. *Indian ink.*

Christ (not a satisfactory figure) is represented addressing a number of persons of all conditions. Behind, an angel in the sky is seen sowing the seed. The merit of this design is greater on examination than its interest at first sight. According to another interpretation, it represents 'Christ as the Good Farmer,' distributing his produce to the poor; and a group in the background shows a hard-hearted farmer whose goods are being destroyed by lightning.

101. Christ as the Good Shepherd.

Different from the preceding, but in some degree analogous to it.

102. \*The Good Farmer. *Pen and ink.*

A scriptural subject.

103. The Resurrection.

A sketch for a design afterwards executed.

104. The Magdalene at the Sepulchre. 'She turned herself back and saw Jesus standing.' [Butts.] *Indian ink, with slight touches of colour.*

Mary kneels at the bottom of the steps leading into the sepulchre, wherein are the two kneeling angels. She is just within the entrance-arch; a graceful, beautiful woman, with what might be termed a modern air (noticeable also, for instance, in the engraved designs of Job's daughters). Behind her stands Christ, whom Blake (as nearly always) aims to make noticeably 'handsome.' Of course, the success in this figure is very qualified. The angels have a tranquil, conscious air, conducive to dignity of presentment. An important though not fully completed specimen.

105. Noli me tangere.

106. Christ, after the Resurrection, appearing to the Apostles in the 'Upper Chamber.'

On the back of No. 90. The Saviour stands right in the midst of the composition. Very slight, yet not destitute of impressiveness.

107. Christ showing the Print of the Nails to the Apostles. *Indian ink.*

108. Eve and Satan (?).

The supposed Satan is a vehemently flying figure, but wingless. A moderate specimen.

109. Sketch of the Virgin, Baptist, and sleeping Jesus—List 1. No. 210. [Linnell.]

110. Christ trampling down Satan.

The supposed Satan is an aged figure; his conqueror may possibly be Michael. Or the whole subject might equally well stand for the New Dispensation superseding the Old Law. Noteworthy for grand, powerful, and correct drawing.

111. A Woman amid Clouds, with Demons crouching below.

Religious and spiritual. Remarkable for the careful finish and almost prettiness of the female figure; at first sight hardly like Blake in this respect.

112. The Last Trumpet. *Indian ink.*

An angel in the upper mid-pane of the design is blowing the trumpet, the tube of which comes forward in a conspicuous way. Souls, chiefly of women and children, are rising from the earth, and received by angels. A moderately good design, having no salient qualities of execution.

113. \*The Last Judgment—also named The Fall of Man. [Butts.]  
*Red and white chalks, slightly coloured.*

A composition of many figures, with Adam and Eve kneeling before the throne of the Judge. Carefully finished. Resembling in general character the Judgment in Blair's 'Grave,' but not identical with it—perhaps finer; seems to be a later and still more elaborate study for the same subject.

114. The Last Judgment. *Red and white chalks, slightly coloured.*

The Saviour stands between Adam and Eve, near the centre of the composition, holding a hand of each. In other respects, the same remarks apply as to the preceding.

115. \*The same. [Butts.] *Indian ink.*

May be classed with the two preceding Nos., being in like manner related to the Last Judgment in Blair's 'Grave.' (See also Nos. 24, 25.) Contains an amazing number of figures, singularly refined. Few works of Blake could contend with this for elaboration and evenness of excellence.

116. \*Angels conducting the Souls of the Just to Paradise.  
*Indian ink.*

Fine, especially in its solemn freedom of motion and of dispersed arrangement in the figures. Much injured, however, by a very prominent, ill-drawn, outstretched arm.

117. Angels—the chief one holding an open book. *Indian ink.*  
At the back of No. 122.

118. \*The Soul entering Eternity. *Indian ink.*

The composition exhibits a maiden entering a door, guarded by two spiritual women. Fine in its solemn, mystic air.

#### D.—POETIC AND MISCELLANEOUS.

119. The Wreck of the White Ship. *Indian ink.*

The subject appears to be the famous historical incident of the loss of the ship wherein the son of Henry I. was returning from Normandy to England. An energetic and impressive composition, which has been autotyped. This is *ascribed* to Blake, and with considerable plausibility, though not certainty: it must belong to his earlier years.

120. \*Hector and Andromache (?). *Pen and ink.*

This is a classic or heroic attempt, evidently an early one, and poor: the title, 'Hector and Andromache,' may serve to suggest the kind of subject, but is not probably the correct one.

121. \*An ideal Composition, illustrative of Spenser (?). *Indian ink.*

A figure, bearing some resemblance to Spenser and holding a book, appears at the summit of some steps, along with two old men. A youth ascends the steps to receive another book from the old man to the left. Below are two women, with harp and book. Not a good design.

122. \*An illustration to Spenser (?). *Indian ink.*

Looks like a companion design to the preceding. The subject is a naked man holding a sapling, and approaching five women with musical instruments, amid trees. Tolerable.





135. 'For Children : the Gates of Hell.'

A slight sketch so inscribed, forming a frontispiece. It is dark midnight, with a figure entering a door.

136. The Death of an Infant.

A small drawing, found among Stothard's prints. The mother is kneeling by the cradle : the infantine soul is being carried by an angel to cherubs above.

137. Beauty.

A sketch for a work afterwards executed.

138. Sketch for a Funeral Card. *Chalk.*

139. Apis (P).

A kneeling figure of a man with a bull's head ; looks rather as if done from a 'vision'—possibly a man born under the sign Taurus? Excellent.

140. Archimedes.

141. \*'And Pity, like a naked, new-born babe,' &c.

A sketch for No. 248, List 1, though differing considerably from it in the details. Moderately good.

142. An Aged Man, with two crouching Women, exorcising three Demoniak Figures.

The 'three demoniac figures' recall strongly the trio engraved by Blake as 'The Accusers of Theft, Adultery, and Murder' (see p. 304, Vol. I., and No. 259, List 1). The other main group is nearly the same as in the 'Europe,' p. 7. Fine.

143. A Naked Man, seated on the ground.

Seems to be an academy study.

144. A Dying Man crouching, with floating figures.

Characteristic.

145. \*An Angel taking a huge stride in the air.

Has the energetic movement which Blake was wont to impart to such figures, but is not a particularly good example.

146. Newton.

A grand figure, quietly, but carefully designed. See List 1, No. 24, which this design corresponds to.

147. Wren.

Evidently intended for Wren, the Dome of St. Paul's being sketched in the distance. Resembles the Newton (146) in general arrangement. His hands trail along the ground.

148. The same.

On the back of the preceding. Here the hands are up to the chin, expressing great tension of mind in a forcible manner.

149. A Man tormented by a huge Serpent.

The general conception recalls Prometheus. A woman is looking on. Fair.

## 150. Water Deities and Nymphs.

Sketched in a rather florid style.

## 151. A Squatted Devil, with young horns.

The face is somewhat of the Satyr type. Ordinarily good.

## 152. Queen Mab (?).

A dreamer visited by a fairy. Slight.

## 153. Clouds personified.

The intention appears unmistakeable, though the drawing is not carried far enough to express it completely. Curious and good.

154. \*Laocoön. *Slightly touched with colour.*

Laocoön (a robed figure), and his two sons, are all standing, agonized under the attack of the serpents. There is no direct resemblance to the celebrated sculptural Laocoön, yet some analogy to it may be traced. Scribbly in execution, and only second-rate.

## 155. A Human-limbed Elephant, dandling a similar Infant Elephant on his foot.

A most quaint and amusing sketch, probably a vision.

156. A Space of Sea, with a Rainbow. *Indian ink.*

Very noble, full of unstrained power, and conveying, in the slightest form, a great sense of space and movement on a majestic scale. Drawn on the back of the preceding.

## 157. \*Five Designs to 'the Book of Enoch.' [Linnell.]

Slight in execution, and as intangible for description as the average of the designs for the Prophetic Books. A miscellany of naked figures in conditions that one does not accurately apprehend.

158. \*A Pastoral Wooing—Jacob and Laban (?). *Indian ink.*

The young shepherd, kneeling, pleads his suit to the father and mother of his shepherdess, who stands coyly aside: the parents are seated under a tree. An agreeable bit of old-fashioned Corydonism.

159. A Pastoral. *Indian ink.*

Two aged shepherds, one of them holding a Pan's pipe: milking, spinning, and other rural and household occupations, are going on. A well-conceived pastoral subject.

## 160. A King Praying. [Linnell.]

He has a hideous face, with shark-like teeth, and other repulsive details. Might possibly be a 'vision' of the King in 'Hamlet,' in the praying scene?

161. Visiting the Sick. *Indian ink.*

A woman, holding a purse and a vase, is crossing the threshold of a cottage, in which an old man has just expired. Another woman by the bedside, and a girl, form the family. Not carried far.

162. The Mourners. *Indian ink.*

Four women, seated at the foot of a flight of steps, two of them having their faces hidden. Fine in grouping and expression, and graceful as well.

163. \*An Allegory of Human Life. [Butts.] *Indian ink.*

A different composition, and to a considerable extent a different idea, from No. 23, though there is probably some relation between the two. There also a tree, which may be the Tree of Life, is introduced. There are a great number of figures, highly finished, representing various aspects of the soul and of life. The whole may be compared to a glorified Masonic broadsheet.

## 164. A Drawing of nine Grotesque or Demoniac Heads. [Linnell.]

An early, finished drawing. The heads are of different types, showing singular or monstrous physiognomies, some having a quasi-demoniac aspect. Inscribed by Blake—'All genius varies thus : devils are various, angels are all alike.'

## 165. Two Figures, with the Sun (or full Moon) to the left.

A sketch of fair merit, not easy to describe ; the sort of design that one finds in Blake's Prophetic Books.

## 166. Egypt.

A naked, standing, male figure, so inscribed. There is a quantity of accessory matter, very slight and scratchy, and practically undecipherable.

## 167. A Naked Male Figure, seated on a Cloud.

Noticeable for the *outré* turning-out of the right leg, extended in a position which ought to be one of rest. Fair.

## 168. The Human Soul.

A male figure bursting out of a sphere, a good deal like the figure named 'Earth' in the 'Gates of Paradise.' Below is sketched in, very slightly, what looks like a curtained entrance guarded by an angel. Curious.

## 169. A Female Torso.

Looks not unlike an Academy study. Besides the female torso, there is another something, which is either a male torso of the most rugged and rocky contours, or an actual mass of rock.

## 170. A Titanic Deity, with some smaller figures.

A small, narrow drawing, of good quality in the character of the Prophetic Book designs.

## 171. An Allegorical Design, with a Dome like that of St. Paul's.

Neatly sketched. The title of this design is subscribed, and looks more like 'Theotormon Worm' than anything else.

## 172. A Girl standing before two bowed seated figures.

Looks like a design for a Prophetic Book. Slight.

## 173. A Crowned Man shooting an Arrow.

Might also be a design for a Prophetic Book. Above the shooter (who either is actually crowned, or else has rayed hair)

is an ancient, spectral-looking man with disspread arms and screeching mouth. Slight, but vigorous.

174. A Man supporting a Swooning Woman.

A sketch of smallish size, good in action.

175. A Crowd, with a Boy beating a Drum.

Very imperfectly made out.

176. Fate. See No. 27 *n*.

177. Nude Studies: Two Men throwing Somersaults, &c.

The two figures specified are drawn with great care and completeness; both of them in difficult positions, and one—arched right over, at the moment that his toes touch the ground again,—in a most daring action, quite a curiosity. The other studies are a carefully-drawn leg; a less satisfactory prostrate figure; and, on the back of the page (among others), a vigorously-designed male figure, kneeling and bending forward, with the hands up to the back of the head.

178. Pity and other Personifications (one sheet of paper, front and back).

Also drawn in an accurate, firm, terse style. 'Pity' is on a tolerably large scale, a woman bending down to succour a man stretched out at length, as if given over to death. On a smaller scale are embodied Doubt, Dissipation, Weariness, Luxury, Idleness, Gratitude, Indolence, Rage, Despair, Deceit, Discontent, Joy, Avarice, Listlessness, Study, Cruelty, Distress, Severity, Oppression, Misery, Mischief, and Protection; each (except, perhaps, Distress), in a single figure, mostly nude.

179. A Deathbed.

On the back of the 'Pity': fine, and characteristic of Blake's style. A naked woman, her head bowed on the pillow and hidden by her outstretched arm, kneels passionately weeping over her youthful husband, whose face has just set into the rigidity of death.

180. Searching among the Dead on a Battlefield.

Two entirely distinct designs, one on the back of the other. There is great expression of the subject in one where a dead horse's head appears in the foreground, and a conflagration in the background; though of the two very rough sketches, this is the rougher.

181. A Man approaching a recumbent Woman.

Slovenly, with no point of merit save the freedom of action.

182. Tyranny Enthroned (?).

In some respects, this suggests the Miltonic subject of Satan giving birth to Sin, though that does not seem to be the exact idea. There are several figures, with plenty of action; expressive, though quite slight.

183. 'In maiden meditation, fancy free.'

A slight pencil-drawing, with figures in the air round a girl who is reading as she walks. Slight, and of a conventional

tendency. The general feeling of the subject seems to be such as would be conveyed by the motto above suggested.

184. A Death-chamber.

A vigorous pencil-sketch, large in style. A naked man in the foreground appears to have died a violent death, to judge from his wrenched position. A woman, sideways behind him, crouches in an agonised heap: three figures are beside her, floating apparently, just above the ground. One might suppose it to be Patroclus, Achilles, and Thetis with her nymphs, but that the Achilles is a woman.

185. A SET OF TWELVE DRAWINGS from Blake's poem, 'Tiriël.' *Indian ink.*

This is a puzzling series—evidently a *series*; often very fine in invention and composition. There is a sort of rational, consecutive look about the subjects, which disposes one to believe that they illustrate some known story, rather than any invention of Blake's own: some of them, however, might do for his unpublished poem, "Tiriël," a piece of erratic Ossianism. Others suggest Ruth, Lot, Oedipus, Lear, Priam; but one fails in attempting to carry any of these histories on through the whole series. I follow the order of subjects as in the Sale-catalogue, modifying some of the titles there given, with the view of bringing out the subjects more distinctly.

- (a) Tiriël supporting the swooning Myratana, and addressing his Sons.

Good. A pyramid is introduced in this design.

- (b) Har, Heva, and Mnetha.

A fine, careful drawing, very individual. Mnetha, whose back is turned, is robed in a richly-patterned dress, unusual with Blake.

- (c) Har asleep, with Heva and Mnetha.

Fine. Here the patterned dress disappears, but a patterned quilt comes as a substitute.

- (d) Har and Heva bathing—Mnetha behind.

A wonderful design, excellent in the tone and depth obtained with simple execution.

- (e) Har and Heva, playing Harps.

Good.

- (f) Har and Tiriël—Heva and Mnetha.

Also fine and careful; the glimpse of thin tree-stems through a door very elegant.

- (g) Tiriël upheld on the shoulders of Ijim,—his Daughters kneeling.

A very grand, inventive design; the work of an artist having some affinity to Flaxman, but more imaginative.

- (h) Tiriël cursing his Sons and Daughters.

Excellent design and composed.

- (i) The Death of Tiriël's Sons.

Not quite finished; Blake-like and mysterious.

## (j) Tiriel and Hela.

Poor in touch, the handling being certainly not wholly that of Blake.

## (k) Har, Tiriel, and Hela.

Tiriel is not one of Blake's finer figures, but more in the manner of Westall. Less good than others, yet meritorious.

## (l) Hela contemplating Tiriel dead in a Vineyard.

Fine. The vines, in lithe, tall ranks, are managed with a true sense of the clear, tempered shadow among thick leafage.

186. A Conversation. *Pen and ink sketch.*

187. The Finding of the Body of Harold. Along with the Noli Me Tangere, No. 105.

188. Death. *Pencil sketch.*

189. Time.

190. A Life-study.

191. A Shepherd with his Dog: also another Figure. (Framed together.)

## LIST No. 3.

### WORKS OF UNASCERTAINED METHOD,

*(Whether Coloured or Uncoloured,)*

ARRANGED ACCORDING TO SUBJECT.

*Indicates that the Work is more probably coloured.*

#### A.—BIBLICAL AND SACRED.

1. 1793. 'Does thy God, O Priest, take such vengeance as this?  
—design for the 'Gates of Paradise.'
2. \*He rode upon the Cherubim. [Butts.]
3. The Departure of Lot.
4. \*Jacob and his Twelve Sons. [Butts.]
5. Samuel. [Butts.]
6. \*The Waters of Babylon. [Butts.]
7. \*The Nativity. [Butts.]
8. The Circumcision. [Butts.]
9. Christ and His Disciples. [Butts.]
10. \*The Beheading of John the Baptist. [Butts.]
11. \*The Miracle of the Loaves and Fishes. [Butts.]
12. Christ before Pilate. [Butts.]
13. \*Satan in his former Glory. [Butts.]
14. Christ and the Church. [Butts.]
15. \*Christ and a Heavenly Choir. [Butts.]

#### B.—POETIC AND MISCELLANEOUS.

16. \*One hundred and eighteen Designs to Gray's Poems. [The  
Duke of Hamilton.]

Reputed to be among the very finest works executed by Blake.



## 17. 'I have sat down with the worm.'

Probably the same design as in the 'Gates of Paradise,' and reported to be fine.

## 18. A Dream of Death.

## 19. The Genius of Morning.

## 20. Portraits of the Actors Cooke and Kemble. [Butts.]

[After this Annotated Catalogue had been re-compiled as revised, a few further Blake designs turned up in the sale-catalogues of Mr. George Smith of Paddockhurst (Christie and Co., April and July, 1880), and in the catalogue of a Blake Exhibition held in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, America. Partly for convenience' sake, and partly on the ground that the new items may perhaps, in some instances, be identical with some of the numbered items in the Annotated Catalogue, these new ones have not been embodied therein, but are here given in a separate list. The few descriptive details are supplied from a letter written by an American Lady.]

## SMITH'S CATALOGUE.—APRIL, 1880.

1. Portrait of Thos. Hayley by Blake, in sepia: bound in a volume containing 103 of Blake's own engravings and an Index to the *Songs of Innocence and Experience* in his Autograph. See No. 54, List I.

## JULY, 1880.

2. Transformation of the Thieves, from *Dante*. *Pencil sketch*.
3. Two *sketches in pencil*.
4. Ditto—Sir Christopher Wren and a male figure.
5. A Frieze of figures. *Coloured*.
6. Death. *Sketch in pencil*.
7. Sketch, similar in subject to *The Soul visiting the Recesses of the Tomb* in Blair's *Grave*. *Indian Ink*.
8. Newton. *Pencil sketch*. Fine.

## EXTRACTS FROM THE BOSTON CATALOGUE.

The omitted items are designs certainly given in the preceding Catalogue.

[*The names of the owners are given. The numbers are those in the Boston Catalogue.*]

8. Colour Sketch of the *Death of the Good Old Man*, from Blair's *Grave*. *Water colour*. [R. C. Waterston.]

[The following 22 designs all lent to the Exhibition by Mrs. Hooper are in water colour : size about 8 ins. by 10, tints vivid.]

58. Children and Sheep, brilliant sky, greensward under the children, and Lambs.
59. Body surrounded by and borne up on Flames.
60. Descent into Hell. Flames, two male figures, lurid sky.
61. Man raising himself from a cleft in the earth.
63. Three Nude Figures, one standing, two reclining ; shadows very black.
64. A Young Man with arms raised—two children in background.
65. Woman leading forward a Group of Children, rocks on each side. [The bottom group in the *Descent to the Tomb*, Blair's *Grave*.]
66. Female Figure.
67. Ditto.
68. Group of three Female Figures in Clouds.
69. Group of six Female Figures, all in page 81 of the *Jerusalem*, of which they appear to be the original conception, being on old yellow paper.
72. Swan bearing a Man through the Air. (From the *America*.)
73. Death's Door.
74. Two Female Figures kneeling.
75. Man meditating ; two small figures hovering near [smaller in size than the others].
76. Resurrection. Figure sitting on a skeleton, apparently the first thought for the upper figure in *Death's Door*,—more full face.
77. Christ and the Dead ; flames behind the dead figure in black.
78. Female figure kneeling on greensward, kissing a child.
79. Spirit of the Sea—emerging from a wave hovers over a bowed and disconsolate figure beside the rocks.
80. Three Figures sitting by the Sea.
81. Three Figures seated under Trees ; trees and landscape in brown outline, figures coloured.
120. The Parent's Blessing. *Water colour*. [H. E. Scudder.]
121. Figures ascending ; sketch of family on the left side of *Last Judgment* in Blair's *Grave*.
- 127.} Two water-colour studies for the *Descent of Man into the Vale of*
- 128.} *Death*. Blair's *Grave*. [R. C. Waterston.]

THE subjoined is a Debtor and Creditor Account between Blake and Mr. Butts, which, as an authentic record of the scale of prices received by the artist, and also as fixing the date of production of some of his most remarkable works, deserves insertion here :—

Dr.	Mr. Butts.		Cr.
May 12, 1805.		£ s. d.	Jan. 12.
Due on Account . . . . .	0 4 0		By Cash . . . . .
12 Drawings, viz.—			12 12 0
1. Famine. 2. War. 3. Moses striking the Rock. 4. Ezekiel's Wheels. 5. Christ girding Himself with Strength. 6. Four-and-twenty Elders. 7. Christ baptizing. 8. Samson breaking his Bonds. 9. Samson subdued. 10. Noah and Rainbow. 11. Wise and Foolish Virgins. 12. "Hell beneath is moved for thee," &c. from Isaiah . . . . .	12 12 0		
5 July. 4 Prints, viz.—			5 July.
1. Good and Evil Angel. 2. House of Death. 3. God judging Adam. 4. Lamech . . . . .	4 4 0		By ditto . . . . .
4 Nos. of Hayley's Ballads . . . . .	0 10 0		5 7 0
7 Sept. 4 Prints, viz.—			7 Sept.
1. Nebuchadnezzar. 2. Newton. 3. God creating Adam. 4. Christ appearing . . . . .	4 4 0		By ditto . . . . .
			4 4 0
Dec. 12—			
Touching up Christ baptizing . . . . .	1 1 0		Balance due from me [i.e. Mr. Butts] previous to my going to Felpham . . . . .
Drawings, &c. sent from Felpham	14 14 0		14 10 8
Uzizen, Heaven, &c. and Songs of Experience, for Balance . . . . .	0 10 6		
3 Hayley's Ballads, per Brother . . . . .	0 7 6		
3 Ditto, Mr. Birch . . . . .	0 7 6		
4 Ditto . . . . .	0 10 0		
History of Master Malkin . . . . .	0 10 6		
Dec. 25, 1805.			By Coals, to 5 Oct. 1805 . . . . .
On account of teaching your son, at 25 Guineas per annum, to commence on this day . . . . .	26 5 0		12 19 0
	<u>£66 0 0</u>		
			Balance paid to Mr. Blake . . . . .
			16 7 4
			<u>£66 0 0</u>

# ENGRAVINGS.

[The following Lists, especially the Second, do not, of course, pretend to completeness. Size is given when it could be ascertained, except in cases where it has been already specified, according to reference.]

## WORKS DESIGNED AS WELL AS ENGRAVED BY BLAKE.

VOL. I.  
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King Edward and Queen Eleanor. 1779. See p. 207.	
List I. No. 2. Vol. II. . . . .	31
Morning, or Glad Day. 10 × 7½ in. 1780. . . . .	28, 32
Mary Wollstonecraft's <i>Tales for Children</i> . 8vo. Six Plates.	
1791. . . . .	89
Nine Plates to Gay's Fables. 8vo. Published by Stockdale.	
1739 . . . . .	
Ezekiel: 'Take away from thee the desire of thine eyes.'	
19 × 14 in. 1794. . . . .	133
Job: 'What is man, that Thou shouldst try him every moment?' 1794 . . . . .	133
Illustrations to Young's <i>Night Thoughts</i> . Folio. 1797. 135—140	
Little Tom the Sailor. Hayley's Broadsheet. 1800.	
18½ × 7½ in. . . . .	153—155
(An instance of the process Blake calls 'wood-cutting on pewter.')	
The Weather House and Cowper's Tame Hares. Vignettes for Hayley's <i>Life of Cowper</i> . 1803 . . . . .	171
Nine Plates to Hayley's Ballads. 4to. 1805. . . . .	176—8
Ditto, reduced, for the 12mo. edition . . . . .	224
The Canterbury Pilgrims. 1817 . . . . .	250—274—280
Small Plate altered from the same for Frontispiece. 8vo. 291—2	
The Accusers of Theft, Adultery, Murder. A Scene in the Last Judgment. Satan's Holy Trinity. The Accuser, the Judge, and the Executioner. The first title inscribed on the background, over the heads of the figures. Very powerful and terrible. 9 × 5 in. . . . .	304

Moses 'laid in the flags by the river's brink.' Small Engraving, of exquisite delicacy and finish. The figure of the mother, fainting and falling back from the little ark, is very beautiful. In the background are pyramids, a sphinx, and river winding down the land—a grand yet sweet ideal of Ancient Egypt.  $4 \times 3$  in.

Drowned figures, Man and Woman, lying on rocks by the sea. Enormous eagles soaring above. Engraved after the fashion of 'wood-cutting on metal.' Very fine.  $5\frac{1}{2} \times 4\frac{1}{2}$  in.

Adam and Eve. Subject looking at first like the Finding the Body of Abel. Adam and Eve stand in impassioned sorrow over a youthful figure—not dead, however, but manacled by the wrists and ankles to the rocky ground—who turns his eyes upon them. A sort of St. Peter's Dome appears in the distance. The design is probably intended for a prophetic symbol of the Atonement. The heads of Adam and Eve are each encircled by a nimbus. On the background is inscribed, 'Type by W. Blake, 1817.' Very similar to the headpiece of the *America*.  $4\frac{1}{2} \times 3$  in.

Group of Figures on the edge of a rock by the sea, gazing, as appears, on some awful or supernatural spectacle in the clouds and waters; roughly etched, in the same method as the preceding. A most impressive, indeed appallingly suggestive composition.  $11\frac{1}{2} \times 8\frac{1}{2}$  in. . . . . 58

Figure, with a glory, standing before a rising or setting sun or globe.

Mirth and her attendant Spirits. Milton's *Allegro*. Engraved from the first Design of the series for the *Allegro* and *Penseroso*. Rather small. P. 246, List I. No. 231A, Vol. II. .

Death's Door. For the *Grave* . . . . . 269

Sacred to Simplicity. Female Figure placing a scroll on a monument.

Four Male Figures.

A Man kneeling. Angels and Demons behind.

Etchings. Subjects from Shakespeare. (Sold at T. H. Burke's Sale, Christie's, June 21st, 1852.)

Seventeen Woodcuts to Thornton's *Virgil*. 1820 . . . 317—20

Sweeping the Interpreter's House, from the *Pilgrim's Progress*.

The man who sweeps the parlour is here a demon-like figure, with strong spiny wings, and the dust he raises is filled with numerous insect-like spirits. A graceful angelic figure brings

the water in a bowl. Example of Blake's 'wood-cutting on copper,' very <i>painter-like</i> in treatment and effect; of signal richness and beauty.	
Inventions to the Book of Job. Folio. 1826 . . . . .	328—36
Mr. Cumberland's Card-plate. 1827 . . . . .	399
Dante. Seven Plates. Small folio. 1824—1827 . . . . .	373—8

## WORKS ENGRAVED BUT NOT DESIGNED BY BLAKE.

Joseph of Arimathea among the Rocks of Albion. 10 × 5½ in. 1773. Broad, effective Engraving; trembling sunlight on the sea well rendered . . . . .	19.
Sundry Plates, in the <i>Memoirs</i> of Hollis, in Gough's <i>Monuments</i> , &c. . . . .	19, 20
Asia and Africa. After Stothard. Frontispiece to a System of Geography. 1779 . . . . .	32—3
Novelist's Magazine, 1779—1782. Eight Plates after Stothard	32—3
Don Quixote. Pl. 7. The Decision of the Doubts concerning Mambrino's Helmet.	
Ditto, Pl. 16. The Peaceful Death of Don Quixote.	
Sentimental Journey. Pl. 2. The Dance of the Peasants.	
David Simple. Pl. 2. David pays the Landlady, and relieves the Distresses of Valentine and Camilla.	
Launcelot Greaves. Pl. 2. Sir Launcelot enjoying the humours of a General Election.	
Sir Charles Grandison. Pl. 8. Miss Byron visiting Miss Emily Jervoise.	
Pl. 9. Duel in Parlour.	
Pl. 12. Grandison's Interview with Clementina and her Mother.	
Clarence's Dream. For Enfield's Speaker. Pub. by Johnson. After Stothard. 1780 . . . . .	33
Scott of Amwell's Poems. Four Plates. After Stothard. Pub. by Buckland. 1782 . . . . .	51
Lady's Pocket-Book. Two Plates. After Stothard. 1782 or 1783 . . . . .	51
Ritson's English Songs. Nineteen Plates, about half of them engraved by Blake. Stothard. Pub. by Johnson. 1783 .	51—2
The Fall of Rosamond. Stothard. Circular. 12 in. Pub. by Macklin. 1783 . . . . .	51

- Zephyrus and Flora : Calisto. Stothard. Two oval Plates.  
8 x 7 in. Pub. by Parker and Blake. 1784 . . . . . 56
- The Wit's Magazine. Pub. by Harrison. 1784. Five Plates. 53—54
- Small Plate for Bonnycastle's *Mensuration*. Stothard.
- Battle of Ain for Maynard's *Josephus*. Stothard.
- Frontispiece to Lavater's *Aphorisms*. 8vo. Fuseli. 1788 . . . . . 61
- Scene from the *Beggars' Opera*. Hogarth. Pub. by Boydell.  
1788. Large, finely-executed Plate.
- Democritus. Rubens. For Lavater's *Physiognomy*. Also for the  
same a Vignette of a Hand and Arm holding a Taper. 4to. 1789.
- Satan. Stothard. Small circular Plate, apparently for Bell's  
Poets, but not used to illustrate Milton.
- Stothard and Friends Prisoners during a Boating Excursion.  
Stothard and Blake.
- Elements of Morality. Fifty Plates. After Chodowiecki. 8vo. 1791. 91
- Hoole's Ariosto. The second of two Plates. Stothard. Pub.  
by Dodsley. 1791.
- The Fertilisation of Egypt. Fuseli. For Darwin's *Botanic  
Garden*. 4to. Johnson. 1791. A good Engraving, softer  
in style and effect than usual . . . . . 91
- Flaxman's Outlines to the Odyssey. 1793 . . . . . 111
- Steadman's Surinam. Fourteen Plates. Pub. by Johnson. 1796. 232-3
- Alfred in the Neatherd's Cottage }  
Wat Tyler and the Tax-gatherer. } Engraved for Johnson,  
King John absolved. } 1797.  
Queen Elizabeth and Essex. }
- Death of Lucretia. }  
Death of Cleopatra. } Ditto, 1797.  
Caius Marius. }  
Mars and Rhea Sylvia. }
- Frontispiece to Flaxman's Letter, representing the colossal  
statue proposed to be erected on Greenwich Hill. 4to. 1799. 141
- Portrait of Lavater, published by Johnson. 1800. 'From a  
Drawing in the possession of the Publisher, taken in 1787.'  
A superb and masterly example. As an Engraver merely,  
Blake ranks high, on the strength of this Plate alone. The  
lines of the face are especially noteworthy for their skilful  
play, firmness and delicacy.
- Figure of Michael Angelo, for Fuseli's Lectures. 8vo. 1801. 161
- Six Plates, from designs for the *Triumphs of Temper*, by Maria  
Flaxman. 8vo. 1803 . . . . . 189

Portrait of Cowper, after Romney .	} For Hayley's <i>Life of</i> <i>Cowper</i> . 1803. . 170-1	
Ditto after Lawrence .		
Portrait of Cowper's Mother. After Heins.		
Cowper's Monument in East Dereham Church. Chancel of East Dereham Church. F. Stone.		1804 . . . . . 189
Dream of Queen Katherine. Fuseli.	} Part of a series to illustrate Shakes- peare. Pub. by Rivington. 1804.	
Romeo and the Apothecary. Ditto		
Portrait of Romney . . . . .		213, 218
The Shipwreck. Romney. For Hayley's <i>Life of Romney</i> .		1809. 213-16
Head of a Man in Fire. Fuseli. Life size. Vigorously and grandly engraved.		
The Idle Laundress. }	} Morland. Square. Pub. by J. R. Smith.	
The Industrious Cottager. }		
Subject apparently from the Scandinavian Mythology (Thor battering the Serpent [?]). Fuseli. Forcibly executed Plate. $9 \times 7\frac{1}{2}$ in.		
Plates for Rees' <i>Encyclopædia</i> , illustrative of the Articles 'Armour' and 'Sculpture.'		1815-16 . . . . . 297
Cumberland's <i>Thoughts on Outline</i> . Eight Plates.		
Flaxman's <i>Hesiod</i> . Thirty-seven Plates.		1817 . . . . . 296
Portrait of Wilson Lowry. Drawn by Linnell. Engraved by Linnell and Blake . . . . .		375
Head of Euler.		
Head of Cornelius Nepos.		
Head of Catullus.		
Demosthenes . . . . .		143
Pericles . . . . .		144

## WORKS DESIGNED BY BLAKE, BUT ENGRAVED BY OTHERS.

Bürger's <i>Lenore</i> . Translated by J. T. Stanley.	4to. 1796.	134-5
Blair's <i>Grave</i> .	4to. 1808 . . . . .	200-207, 246-50.

## WRITINGS BY BLAKE.

[Of these all are engraved, not type-printed, and embellished with designs as described in the *Life*, except those marked with an asterisk, which are printed in the ordinary manner, and unillustrated.]

	VOL. I. PP.	VOL. II. PP.
*Poetical Sketches. 8vo. 1783 . . . . .	23-26	1-25
Songs of Innocence. 8vo. 1789 . . . . .	70-75, 408, 418-19	29-50
Book of Thel. 4to. 1789 . . . . .	76-78	77-83



	VOL. I. PP.	VOL. II. PP.
Marriage of Heaven and Hell. 4to.		
1790 . . . . .	67, 78-89	
*The French Revolution. 8vo.		
Book the First. 1791 . . . . .	89	
The Gates of Paradise. 12mo. 1793	99-102	
Visions of the Daughters of Albion.		
Folio. 1793 . . . . .	102-106	
America: a Prophecy. Folio. 1793,	106-110	
Songs of Experience. 8vo. 1794.	116-123, 418	51-76
Europe: a Prophecy. Folio. 1794	124-27	
The Book of Urizen. 4to. 1794 .	127, 128, 419	
The Song of Los. 4to. 1795 . .	129-31, 419	
The Book of Ahania. 4to. 1795.	131-133	
Jerusalem. 4to. 1804 . . . . .	185, 187, 189, 226-240	
Milton. 4to. 1804 . . . . .	240-45	
*Descriptive Catalogue. 8vo. 1809	31, 274-76	137-63
The Laocoön		
The Ghost of Abel.	Sibylline Leaves 294	{ 197-200 179-180
On Homer's Poetry.		
On Virgil.		

There is no Natural Religion. Eight (?) Small Leaves, each containing a thesis on this favourite dogma of Blake's, accompanied by a slight coloured design.

In a List of Works by Blake, offered for sale by his widow, to Mr. Ferguson (p. 410, Vol. 1), occurs the following item:—

Outhoun. 12 Plates, 6 inches, more or less. Price £2 2s. 0.

[I have never seen a copy of this, nor been able to find any one who has. Even Mr. Linnell had never heard of it. But the above must be taken, I think, as indisputable evidence that such a book does or did exist. An ingenious friend suggested that 'Outhoun' might be another title for the *Visions of the Daughters of Albion*, in which one Outhoun plays a prominent part. But the number of plates in the two not corresponding decisively negatives such a supposition.]

Tiriel, first printed in the Aldine edition of the British Poets: *William Blake*. Edited by William Michael Rossetti. 1874.

Poems gleaned from the MS. Note-book belonging to Mr. Rossetti; printed for the first time in this work:—

Ideas of Good and Evil, pp. 85-128 Vol. II.

Couplets and Fragments, pp. 129-134 Vol. II.

Prose from the same source:—

Public Address, pp. 164-177 Vol. II.

A Vision of the Last Judgment, 185-200 Vol. II.

[The following is a copy of a characteristic Prospectus issued by Blake, in 1793. The original is in engraved writing printed in blue on a single leaf about  $11 \times 7\frac{1}{2}$  inches. Of course it has become excessively rare, the specimen here described having been obtained only at the last moment, through perseveringly kind efforts on the part of Mr. Frost, A.R.A.]

*October 10, 1793.*

*To the Public.*

The Labours of the Artist, the Poet, the Musician, have been proverbially attended by poverty and obscurity; this was never the fault of the Public, but was owing to a neglect of means to propagate such works as have wholly absorbed the Man of Genius. Even Milton and Shakespeare could not publish their own works.

This difficulty has been obviated by the Author of the following productions now presented to the Public; who has invented a method of Printing both Letter-press and Engraving in a style more ornamental, uniform, and grand, than any before discovered, while it produces works at less than one-fourth of the expense.

If a method of Printing which combines the Painter and the Poet is a phenomenon worthy of public attention, provided that it exceeds in elegance all former methods, the Author is sure of his reward.

Mr. Blake's powers of invention very early engaged the attention of many persons of eminence and fortune; by whose means he has been regularly enabled to bring before the Public works (he is not afraid to say) of equal magnitude and consequence with the productions of any age or country: among which are two large highly finished engravings (and two more are nearly ready) which will commence a Series of subjects from the Bible, and another from the History of England.

The following are the Subjects of the several Works now published and on Sale at Mr. Blake's, No. 13, Hercules Buildings, Lambeth.

1. Job, a Historical Engraving. Size 1 ft.  $7\frac{1}{2}$  in. by 1 ft. 2 in.:  
price 12s.
2. Edward and Elinor, a Historical Engraving. Size 1 ft.  $6\frac{1}{2}$  in.  
by 1 ft.: price 10s. 6d.

3. America, a Prophecy, in Illuminated Printing. Folio, with 18 designs, price 10s. 6*d*.
4. Visions of the Daughters of Albion, in Illuminated Printing. Folio, with 8 designs, price 7s. 6*d*.
5. The Book of Thel, a Poem in Illuminated Printing. Quarto, with 6 designs, price 3s.
6. The Marriage of Heaven and Hell, in Illuminated Printing. Quarto, with fourteen designs, price 7s. 6*d*.
7. Songs of Innocence, in Illuminated Printing. Octavo, with 25 designs, price 5s.
8. Songs of Experience, in Illuminated Printing. Octavo, with 25 designs, price 5s.
9. The History of England, a small book of Engravings. Price 3s.
10. The Gates of Paradise, a small book of Engravings. Price 3s.

The Illuminated Books are Printed in Colours, and on the most beautiful wove paper that could be procured.

No Subscriptions for the numerous great works now in hand are asked, for none are wanted; but the Author will produce his works, and offer them to sale at a fair price.

DESCRIPTIVE NOTES  
OF THE DESIGNS TO  
YOUNG'S "NIGHT THOUGHTS."



## DESCRIPTIVE NOTES OF THE DESIGNS TO YOUNG'S 'NIGHT THOUGHTS.'

A FEW words are necessary on the history and constitution of the treasure books which, since the former issue of this 'Life of William Blake,' have passed into the hands of Mr. Bain, of the Haymarket.

On opening the first volume we find inscribed the name of 'Richard Edwards, of High Elms,' heretofore well known as the publisher of the incomplete edition of Young's 'Night Thoughts' with Blake's engraved illustrations: but, until the discovery of these two wondrous volumes, it was never suspected that the complete series of designs to the 'Nine Nights' was executed by the artist, and bound up at the time, having been ever since carefully preserved in the publisher's family, resident in Yorkshire.

Now to speak of the composition of the books, containing five hundred and thirty-seven designs.

There was published in Parts or 'Nights,' between 1742-1745, a quarto edition of the 'Night Thoughts,' and a copy of the letter-press, 9 inches high by  $6\frac{1}{2}$  wide, is inlaid, somewhat out of the centre, within a sheet of drawing-paper, measuring 17 by  $12\frac{3}{4}$  inches. This (it all bears the watermark 'J. Whatman, 1794') is again itself inlaid in a stronger edging of paper, bearing on its inner margin a ruled and tinted framework, which bounds and encloses the designs; the whole page thus elaborately constituted measuring 21 by 16 inches.

The space left between the inlaid text and the outer margin of the drawing-paper is, as before indicated, unequally distributed, being broad at the base and one side, and narrow at the top and opposite side. Filling these spaces, and covering both sides of the sheet, the designs are drawn with the brush in Indian ink, and then coloured, sometimes in pale tints only, sometimes with full depth and richness.

At the beginning of each volume there is a frontispiece entirely filled with design, unbroken by text; and each Night has, to its pages

of Title and Preface, appropriate and suggestive inventions, besides those which illustrate the text of the poem.

It remains now to pass to the description of so many of the inventions as it has been found expedient to select, premising that the irregular numbers prefixed to them follow the order in which, under some error, they have been arranged by the binder.

The Frontispiece to the First Volume is the original design for that plate in the Engraved Edition, which, representing the Resurrection of Christ, bears upon it the inscription 'The Christian Triumph.' Opposing this is the title-page, 'The Complaint, or Night Thoughts,' dated 1743—

Meditating on life, death, and immortality, the holy Book open before him, a young man sits up in bed, a lamp by his side. Around him rise visions of his thoughts : Life, as a beautiful youth, standing with spade in hand over an open grave, wherein is seen the body of an aged man, whose immortal spirit, rejuvenated, springs joyfully heavenward through the Clouds of Night.

On the back of this is designed—

The night sky, jewelled with stars of varied hue, and among them, travelling over the hills and valleys of massy rolling clouds, a puny pilgrim man, staff in hand, pursues his marvelling search.

- No. 9. 'Night, sable Goddess ! from her ebon throne  
In rayless majesty, now stretches forth  
Her leaden sceptre o'er a slumbering world.'

One seeming mass of dark and rolling cloud, out of which there emerges, gradually, to the searching gaze, a sombre globe, on which the Goddess Night bows her drowsy head veiled with its own long loose locks ; her leaden sceptre pendant in her right hand presses on the 'slumbering world.' The colour wonderful for imaginative impressiveness.

17. 'Oh how self-fettered was my grov'ling soul !  
How like a worm was I wrapt round and round  
In silken thought, which reptile Fancy spun.'

An old man, with long white beard, holds a mirror, fixedly engrossed with the contemplation of his own image. He is enveloped in a green covering, marked with segments like the body of a caterpillar, and lies curled within an earth-coloured circle, which figures our terrestrial planet. A chain surrounds this, by which it is hung from the blue celestial sphere, a section of which, with white stars, is seen above. An angel or spirit floats in mid air, with action expressive of amazement at the mortal's infatuation.

28. Dead Joys.

A mourner laments with bitter cry of bereavement the sudden death of two young joys, beautiful little figures, that lie, with stretched-out limbs, on the greensward. One tender Joy, yet left alive, uncherished and unregarded, takes flight, like a

white curling vapour across the sweet blue sky. Very beautiful in colour and design.

29. 'Death : . . .  
Beckoned

The worm to riot on that rose so red.'

A grand, ancient impersonation of Death, floating against a dark void of neutral grey, beckons on, with one hand, a worm moving in spiral curves, and with the other points to his latest victim, a beautiful maiden, who, her head pillowed on green leaves, and the flush of young life scarce flown, still looks like a living rose.

35. As a female figure full of beauty the Soul is portrayed, leaping in poetic transport skyward from the earth, bearing a lyre ; but her light foot is shackled, and the chain, drawn tense by her ascent, suddenly drags her down from her soaring and ecstatic flight.

Following the misplaced drawings in the first volume, the next which occurs to our selection is numbered 150, and should have found its place in the designs to the Eighth Night :—

- 150 'Faith builds a bridge from this world to the next,  
O'er Death's dark gulf, and all its horror hides.'

Though slightly indicated, the force of the rushing waters of the dark gulf which surge against the piers of the bridge is forcibly conveyed. They may rage, for its arches are of solid masonry ; and Faith, a manly figure with a nimbus about the head, presses securely across through the darkness—the guiding Book open in his hands,

155. 'Truth is deposited with man's last hour.'

A sick man on his pallet starts in sudden alarm at the solemn admonition of a little figure, the embodiment of his last hour, which, on the point of flight, poises on his open palm. Other sister figures, the last links in the chain of life's hours, ascend hand in hand, and are lost to view in the clouds.

37. A design full of movement and grace.

The spirits of two friends who have been separated, but now are again joined by Death's hand, meet in descending and ascending rush, and are locked ecstatically in one another's embrace.

84. 'Woes cluster ; rare are solitary woes.'

One of the mightiest of this great series of designs. To convey any adequate idea of the terrible power of it is impossible in words.

Behold the silver clouds torn asunder ! Strange undefined masses afar off swirl downwards through the wide rent. One approaches and impends immediately over us. It is appalling ! Knit together in one convulsed throe, inseparable partners of mingled misery, it is a concrete pack of 'clustered woes' that looms upon our sight, some shrieking in wild anguish, some huddled in silent despair.



The leaden hue of plague is on the face of the central woe, and its fear-awakening eyes are bloodshot and streaming tears. Among its fellows of the grisly troop, two, flanking this salient horror, would haply reveal more fearful lineaments still, were not their dread faces buried in bowed despair.

For long the vision of this confluence of mortal tribulation haunts the mind, which shudders as it recalls the giant strength of the fearful imagery.

92. 'Ruin from man is most concealed when near,  
And sends the dreadful tidings in the blow.'

A noble youth meets a maiden in trusted embrace, and kisses her; she, with treacherous hand stretched behind, stabs him in the back.

93. Death, furious, with rushing stride, from both hands aims his darts. His giant form is vested only in its own long hair and beard, amid which 'numerous ills' swarm thick, attendant on their awful lord.

101.

The Soul has flown on high, and, seated above the starry firmament, gazes, as insatiate with the reflection of God's glory in creation, upward to the dazzling light of the eternal throne.

New hopes and joys are seen emanating from the entranced soul, ascending in form of delicate ethereal figures.

102. 'We give for Time eternity's regard.'

Three fair females worship, kneeling before the fleeting figure of impartial Time, who passes them without respect.

103. 'Night assists me here.'

A grand design. The ponderous figure of Night seated upon a cloud. Over the full moon droop the solemn tresses of her silver hair. Her finger to her brow in silent cogitation.

81. 'Where Sense runs savage, broke from Reason's chain,  
And sings false peace, till smothered by the pall.'

The beauty and terror of this design (which is included in the engraved selection) is here greatly enhanced by the colour of the green earth and hills and crimson sunrise (ever with Blake the portent of impending woe, as, for example, in the poem of the 'Angel'—

'So he took his wings and fled,  
Then the morn blush'd rosy red.  
I dried my tears and armed my fears  
With ten thousand shields and spears'),

against which rises the lithesome figure of young Sense, exhilarating in her new-found liberty, all unconscious of the awful Death, who, with dark overhanging pall, poises ready to engulf her suddenly in its stifling folds.

48. 'The Spirit walks of every day deceased.'

A grand spirit figure, with towering wings, moving in slow sad step, with drooping hands and dejected head, the eyes fixed as in disconsolate grief. The whole of the winged form is white, with dark grey background relieving it.

50. 'Man flies from Time, and Time from Man.'

Man speeding in one direction, Time flying in the opposite. Above the text appear two smaller figures, one mourning the too swift current of his days, the other overturning the too sluggish hour-glass.

107. 'Then welcome Death! thy dreaded harbingers Age and Disease.'

Crimson artery and white nerve interlace in tangled maze, and coursing through man's curious framework we see, side by side, the fell associates, Age and Disease, in mutual action joined. Age with white beard and hands extended as if gently soothing the mortal system to its rest, and Disease distilling black poison through it from two vials.

109. 'Death wounds to cure; we fall, we rise, we reign!  
Spring from our fetters, fasten in the skies.'

Death, with kindly hand, unbinds the fetters which chain Man to the earth, whose liberated spirit, with expanded arms, springs exultingly upward, cleaving its path through the blue heaven.

(*End of Night the Second.*)

146. A Titan shade of Death casting down the mouldering wall which separates time from eternity.

72. Another form of an invention frequent with Blake. A pale corpse lies below, stretched across the page, and bowed at its feet a solitary mourner. Rejoicingly springs the free soul upward, two angels escorting it, one of whom looks down with pitiful expression on the bereaved weeper.

74. A female figure lying stretched in the last moments of life beside a troubled sea, beyond which the golden sun sinks down. On the upper margin stands a lamp, the smoke of its expired light ascending.

120. 'Ah me! too long I set, I set at nought  
The swarm of friendly Warnings which around me flew  
And smiled unsmitten.'

Man is seen surrounded by troops of friendly Warnings: some, rising from the earth, cling to him, entreating attention; one seeks to pluck his left hand, which wilfully he fastens against his side. Three heavenly messengers descend admonishing him with consentaneous action; these, with his right hand, he motions away. Again we see a crimson sunrise, ominous presage of the wrath which follows on stubborn blindness.

121. A grand figure of an aged man, leaning eagerly forward, forgetful of his crutch and feebleness, to welcome the advent of 'The Friendly Foe,' whose pale immensity is seen towering against the dark mists which gather to obscure the sunlight of the earth.

122. A seraph seated on a cloud, harping his holy numbers, to whom looks up the Christian poet, emulating the heavenly melody on

his own lyre, while a group of earthly listeners hang entranced on his efforts.

54. 'Man sleeps, and Man alone.'

The slumbering figure of Man is seen. In his sleep his Hours have flitted past unnumbered, as a linked chain of tiny, delicate forms, hand in hand, which vanishes in a dark cloud at one extremity, and at the other, suddenly snapped, the last Hour of the chain stretches out her hand towards a new-born Hour (at the other side of the page) never to be enjoyed by the dreamer, for it starts back on the verge of the cloud from which it has just emerged, as red lightnings, arrows, and swift-hurled shapes of woe descend upon the sleeper's head, fondly secure.

57. 'The world, that gulf of souls, immortal souls,  
Souls elevate, angelic, winged with fire.'

One flame-winged soul apparently engaged in groping in the shallows of a watery gulf for lost treasure, all unregardant of a fellow soul near him sinking in its depths, vainly, with flickering wings, struggling for deliverance, his eyes upraised to a descending angel who stretches out his hand to save.

32. 'All pay themselves the compliment to think  
They, one day, shall not drivell.'

An aged man, crowned with cap and bell, reflecting on past follies, but still holding to the toy weathercock which has pleased his heedless life.

The *abandon* of design in the trailing vine which enriches the upper margins of the page is delightful in its lively playfulness.

## NIGHT THE FIFTH.

### Title-page to 'The Relapse.'

As Blake perceives the title of this canto there flashes on his vision the awful example of relapse which our Lord holds up in the warning words, 'Remember Lot's wife.'

Looking behind, in the very instant of disobedience, smitten with her startled hands in the sudden action of horror at the sight of guilty Sodom's doom, her hair dishevelled as from unprepared flight, she stiffens on the plain, a white and glistening monument of Divine judgment. Afar are seen the domes and embattled wall of the city, beneath a sky red glowing like a furnace, and pouring down a storm of destroying flame.

The momentary pause in the flight, and the shock of dismay, are rendered subservient to a monumental dignity in the figure which makes this design grandly impressive.

'The Muse  
Has often blushed at her degenerate sons.'

The Muse of Poetry, bay crowned, with feet enchained to earth, sits piping gaily to a gross reclining figure of a crowned Venus holding a mirror, from whose side a Cupid aims his darts. Above the text a harp lies with a bow and quiver.

164. 'Man smiles in ruins, glories in his guilt,  
And infamy stands candidate for praise.'

A laurel-crowned warrior, in black mail, stands, with arrogant air, pointing to his blood-stained sword, as claiming the reward of conquest; one iron foot is planted upon the head of an unarmed and prostrate victim.

166. Night stoops from her seat amid the rolling spheres of the universe over the couch of an awakened and trembling sleeper, to whom she presents a tablet traced with solemn thoughts and memories by the style she holds in her right hand.

167. A white and lovely figure of Divine poesy, stretching, with vessel upheld in both hands, to catch the dew of heavenly inspiration distilled from a blue starry sky.

172. 'Delightful Gloom ! the clustering thoughts around  
Spontaneous rise, and blossom in the shade.'

A wonderful design, significant of the fruitfulness of midnight meditations. Seated on a cloud, pure as from his Maker's hand, Man gathers fruit from a luxuriant vine that, rich with ripest clusters, embowers him beneath one great rainbow-like arch which sweeps across the starlit sky.

175. Pale Grief, opening her endless scroll, aged and grey robed, instructs the tender young in the hard lessons of her school. Tears drip from overhanging clouds.

179. 'Truth bids me look on men as autumn leaves,  
And all they bleed for as the summer's dust  
Driven by the whirlwind.'

Sweeping through the air, a keen-eyed, eagle-nosed giant, his moustaches twirled in military guise, blows before him with huge serpent-mouthed trumpet, as a cloud of dust, both the flying and pursuing armies of contending men. A tree, wind-bared of leaves, overhangs the page.

188. 'Lorenzo, hast thou ever weighed a sigh ?'

A mighty angel weighs together in a great balance a sunken and mourning female figure, against a stately crowned king, with orb and sceptre, all whose glory proves lighter than the oppressed one's sigh.

190. 'That noble gift ! that privilege of man  
From Sorrow's pang, the birth of endless joy.'

A huddled figure of grey Penitence seated in gloom, from whose sad head, sunken between its knees, bursts a sudden birth of golden joy, fire-winged. 'Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted' is the key-note of this beautiful design.

191. 'When the sick soul, her wonted stay withdrawn,  
Reclines on earth, and sorrows in the dust.'

Tenderly lovely and touching is this design, which Mr. Bain has caused to be well engraved in outline for private distribution.

Personified as a beautiful female figure, the Soul, heaven born, and 'trailing clouds of glory' which sweep in one grand curve upward round the page, against the pure blue sky, buries its face and soils its golden locks in the dust of this earth, a segment of its orb crossing the lower part of the drawing.

194. 'What weakness see not children in their sires.  
Grand—climacterical absurdities!'

A grandsire with time's snows thick on his head counting his cherished gold: his little granddaughter observant of his act. Behind, a younger child stretches out its hands to seize the perishable object of its desire, a butterfly, which has settled on a prickly plant.

196. Man, as a shepherd, fatuously lying down to slumber on the very brink of an awful precipice, topples, driven off by the wind, and all unconscious of his fate, into the abyss below. His dog, by instinct wiser, sleeps securely far from the dangerous edge. Great cloud masses, magnificently designed, fill the right-hand margin.

197. A strong man clings to and pursues his way along the trembling thread of life, which alone sustains him in the midst of space. Seated on a cloud, Destiny, as grim and aged Fate, cuts the thread with remorseless shears.

201. 'Give Death his due, the wretched and the old;  
Ev'n let him sweep his rubbish to the grave.'

The attempt to give visible form' to this metaphor treads on the limits of absurdity; still, so terribly in earnest is this giant presentation of the ancient pale one, as he sweeps before him a heap of infirm and aged beings, while the young and active fly from the fatal besom which he wields, that the mind yields to the daring simplicity of the designer without resentment.

205. The spring of this design resembles that before noticed as No. 81, but is very inferior in beauty and power. Here, while gay pleasure-seekers, rose garlanded, dance to pipe and lyre, they are overshadowed by the Titan hand of Death, who, crowned with roses in mockery, stoops his pallid face above the festival.

208. 'When Fortune thus has toss'd her child in air.'

As a child a shuttlecock, so crowned Fortune tosses her transitory favourite, a youthful figure, into airy elevation, who, elated with his baseless post, recks not of the headlong fall through space of his predecessor in the favour of the fickle goddess.

209. Ingenuity is exhausted in varied figures of the uncertainty of man's estate. In this we see a puny mortal, cradled in a lofty nest upon the topmost branches of a tall tree, which is seized and violently shaken by a wild and howling figure of a mighty wind. 'Though thou shouldst make thy nest as high as the eagle, I will bring thee down from thence, saith the Lord.'

211.

A grim image of Lucre sits throned above his hidden treasures, crushing a helpless victim with one foot, while others worship before him, some greedily hugging bags of gold, while one, a female figure, whose golden riches have taken wings and fly from her, frantically pursues them.

## NIGHT THE SIXTH.

## 'The Infidel Reclaimed.'

On one side kneels the Christian, with beautifully earnest expression, one hand pointing heavenward, the other directing attention to the words of the inspired Book which lies open between himself and the unbeliever, who kneels on the opposite side, and, also pointing to the Book, places the forefinger of his other hand upon the seat of reason, as arguing that he finds no answering voice within to that of the revealed Word. Above floats an angel, who surveys the controversy with wondering interest.

This forms the frontispiece to the Preface.

224. 'The day that drove me to the brink  
And pointed at Eternity below.'

The day of deadly sickness as a strong pursuing figure, has driven vainly-resisting man backwards to the brink of a precipice, the 'Dreadful Post of Observation,' where he stands, with arms uplifted in terror, as he turns his face downward to the enforced survey of the yawning pit below, which shoots up long tongues of flame towards his trembling feet.

233. 'Ambition, Avarice; two demons these  
Which goad through every slough our human herd.'

A plough is guided by a mitred bishop, side by side with whom stalks a king, who sharply goads the weary 'hard travell'd' abjects on, that, cruelly harnessed, labour on their knees through the miry clay at the will of their relentless drivers.

234. 'Were they as vain as gaudy-minded man,  
As flatulent with fumes of self-applause,  
Their arts and conquests animals might boast,  
And claim their laurel crowns as well as we.'

A wolf, terribly designed, with bloody mouth, rending a lovely youth, whose fellow takes terrified refuge in the branches of a tree.

236. 'Great ill is an achievement of great Powers.'

A Titan falls from heaven, clutching at and dragging down, in his headlong plunge, two shining worlds from their spheres, streaming fiery tails of destruction.

238. Pride winged, but with her hands bound and blindfold eyes,  
dares a reckless flight through space. Above is a hawk hooded in scarlet.

239. 'Milk and a swathe at first his whole demand  
His whole domain at last, a turf or stone  
To whom between a world may seem too small.'

On the top of the page, a mother recumbent with an infant ; swept with a great circle round about the text is the round world, and at the lower margin there stretches a plain monumental slab upon the green turf.

242. 'At Glory grasp, and sink in infamy.'

A grim night scene, in which an idiot plunges into a swiftly rushing river, madly grasping at the seeming stars which glitter in its deep waters, reflected from the sky above.

247. 'Wealth, cruel task-master.'

Old, but strong, with jaundiced face, sits Wealth by a deep pit, armed with a spade, and urges his heavy-burdened slave to cast his sack of gold therein.

- 251.

'The man . . .  
Whom immortality's full force inspires.'

Standing in the full blaze of golden day, arrayed in spotless white, appears the righteous man, 'set upon a hill.' In the sunless cave below cower the earth-bound slaves of ambition, lean covetousness, war, and revenge,—king, miser, assassin, and warrior.

253. 'Heedless Vanity's fantastic toe.'

In the hey-day of youth, a gay maiden figure, flower-wreathed and brightly clad, of exquisite grace and sprightliness of design, lifts daintily, with either hand, her gauzy robe, as she carols and dances heedlessly on towards a new-made grave which gapes for her next light step.

- 256.

'All to reflourish, fades,  
As in a wheel, all sinks, to reascend ;  
Emblems of man, who passes, not expires.'

Green-clad, gay Spring, blowing her breezy pipe ; rose-wreathed, red Summer ; Autumn adult, and laden with the fruits of its own golden season ; and white Winter, with icy trumpet, from which he pours a snowy storm, circle in succession round the central text of the page.

- 'Nature revolves, but man advances ; both eternal, that a circle, this a line.'

Eternity under the accepted emblem of a serpent whose extremities join in a circle ; and on its topmost curve, his noble form firmly erect, the feet close together, the hands uplifted to full stretch and joined together aspiringly, stands Man, a soaring line, against the blue heaven.

The final illustration of the first volume of the drawings shows Death the Awful, awed and worshipping before the Lord of Life rising from the grave—

'O Death, where is thy sting ?'

The second volume in Mr. Bain's possession opens with a frontispiece which fills the whole page—

Christ as the Light of the World, the Sun of Righteousness, appears in the centre of the design, seen only to the bust, and

environed with thick darkness, which, with His outspread, pierced hands and the radiant glory which emanates from His person, He parts and dispels. Dimly apparent within the darkness visible beneath him, looms the shrouded image of the power of darkness, writhing in mortal agony, pierced through and through with the sharp shafts of 'The Light that shineth in darkness.'

275.

A contented flock feed at the feet of their discontented and murmuring shepherd, who, with rosy morn rising on the sweet greensward, and youth possessed, wrings his hands in longing for some infatuate desire.

282. 'Can man by Reason's beam be led astray?'

Blake answers this question by recalling to our minds the young man who, though he profited in all the wisdom of his nation, yet kept the garments of those that stoned the martyr Stephen, and afterward confesses, 'I verily thought within myself that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth.' A heavenly light illumines the youthful proto-martyr's figure as, with arms folded across his breast in intercession for his murderers, he falls beneath the stones.

287.

'Man is a monster, the reproach of heaven;  
A stain, a dark impenetrable cloud  
On Nature's beauteous aspect.'

An awful pictorial metaphor of the natural man. Enchained, the back seen towards us, is a huddled, crouching figure of mighty proportions, his depressed head sunk gloomily between his clenched hands, obscuring, like an impenetrable leaden-coloured cloud, the great orb of the golden sun, across which, as an 'Amazing Blot,' he is flung.

294.

Virtue as a white-veiled, wan, and haggard vestal, barefoot, and 'kept alive by care and toil,' pursuing her midnight labour at a spinning-wheel.

295.

Blind Industry, fain to rest, weary and stumbling with the thrall of laying up 'treasure upon earth,' is whipped and spurred to ceaseless travail by the evil spirit mounted on his back, which he has suffered to control and guide his aims.

301. 'The Christian truly triumph'd in the Flame.'

Completely enveloped in the consuming flames which conceal the stake on which his naked body is lifted, an aged Christian martyr, with hands joyfully upraised, and nought to tell that fire is not his native element save the strong chain about his loins, seems already soaring heavenward in the flesh.

303.

Conscience, a womanly figure, white-winged, and clothed in a black robe and white stole, with a scarlet hood,<sup>1</sup> bearing a sharp spear and table of the law, stands over a penitent, in sad-coloured dress, who bows below her feet.

<sup>1</sup> The colour of the hood probably alludes to man's sins, which are compared to scarlet for their dye.



306.

As a white-vestured messenger of the skies, Truth presents her faithful mirror for a mortal's view, who seems as though he would fain sink into the earth, if so he might escape its revelation of himself.

308.

A recumbent figure of a bald-headed elder, who, regarding with eyes askance two angelic messengers, Duty and Religion, turns away his head, and literally stops his ears from their celestial monitions.

313. 'Annihilation! how it yawns before me.'

Like a swift meteor suddenly extinguished, so we see the Soul, 'that particle of energy divine,' precipitated from its soaring flight, the blasting horror of imminent nothingness strikes on its blanched face, its form cowers and shrinks with dread of the inevitable doom which has seized upon it, for its lower parts are flaming, and the smoke of its own consumption streams in its downward wake through the chaotic darkness, amid bursting worlds which fall with it, shapeless, sweeping fiery trains of ruin.

315.

'And is there nought on earth  
But a long train of transitory forms  
Rising and breaking millions in an hour?  
Bubbles of a fantastic deity, blown up  
In sport, and then in cruelty destroy'd?'

The page glistens with floating bubbles of creation; two new blown, each contain an infant form for a moment, others bursting let their inmates fall through space, which is filled with scattered, wind-driven vapour of past generations of transient existences.

320.

' . . . . . Poor man, a spark  
From non-existence . . . . . '

Here a variety of the same idea is given in a babe beaming with joy within the effulgence of a vivid meteor which, with lightning velocity, crosses the darkness. Very full in colour, the zigzag tail of the meteor especially being of bright prismatic tints.

328.

'Who would not give a trifle to prevent  
What he would give a thousand worlds to cure?'

In the illustration this reflection of the poet is presented in the vivid guise of our Lord's stern parable of Dives. Lazarus reposes in the bosom of Father Abraham above; the black, impassable gulf of separation lies between them and the rich man, who from a sea of surging flame looks upward, his hands as if about to clasp in entreaty, checked in their vain purpose by the austere admonition, 'Son, remember.' The colour intense, blue, crimson, and amber flame writhing up against a black void.

332.

The Soul, the dainty Ariel of man's estate, sent out on 'curious trial,' about to 'dart her flight,' with tiny foot resting on the brow of a studious man below, who, leaning on an open book, points the path of its adventure. The little figure, attentive to his command, beautifully poised.

340.

Here we have the antecedent of that most majestic of conceptions—

'When the morning stars sang together  
And all the Sons of God shouted for joy,'

which occurs in the 'Inventions to the Book of Job.' From the shape of the space at Blake's command, one white-vestured angel alone is seen entire, and the exultant symmetry of the spreading arms of two others fills the upper margin. Admirable is the figure of the reclaimed unbeliever below, on his knees beside the open Book which has shot conviction into his soul.

343.

'That tyrant, Hope ! mark how she domineers ;  
She bids us quit realities for dreams.'

Winged and visionary Hope springs lightly on the shoulders of a labourer engaged in reaping a golden harvest, and points him to some dreamy prize, for which he casts away his sickle, and hastes to follow her witching flight.

The prophet Isaiah, with scroll and ready pen, seated with enraptured eye upturned toward a glorious seraph swooping vertically down, bearing between his hands the live and purging coal taken from the altar, which he applies to the prophet's confessedly 'unclean lips.'

This grand design ends the Seventh Night.

There follows here the title-page to the Eighth Night. All attempt to present this sublimely terrible vision to the reader's mind must fall far short :—

On the right margin, crowned and bedizened with jewels, the name of Mystery on her forehead, and the golden cup of her fornication in her right hand, her left stretched out in invitation, sits the Scarlet Woman, throned on the back of the great red Dragon, whose dreadful, sanguine tail, blurred with streaks of murky black, and sting-tipped, flung angrily on high, casts down the stars of heaven. Around the base and left-hand margins of the text are ranged his seven devouring heads, an infernal unity of the maleficent powers of 'The Mystery of Iniquity.' The most prominent and central one is crowned with a papal tiara, and has venerable white beard and locks, but two sharp horns protrude from its merciless brows, beneath which glare white, stony eyeballs, pupil-less, streaming hypocritical tears down its brazen cheeks, and its implacable lips are red and dripping with 'the blood of the saints.' Its immediate supporters are two crowned heads, significant of the kingly powers which have upheld and abetted the Romish tyranny, the nearer one being in likeness as a ferocious ram, with huge brazen horns meeting in its threatening front, and sullen brooding sockets whose dusky depths gleam with lurid fire. Next of these soul-quaking terrors, stretching its scaled neck toward us, is the power of conquering, cruel war. The livid semblance that it wears for face is shut within an iron casque, armed with horns, and bears, within its skull-like orbits, bloodshot and lidless balls, whose raging fiery

glare fascinates horribly, and its gore-streaked lips are drawn back in savage fury over grinding teeth. Last, on the right hand, a judge's wig set on its steel-horned head, is seen the figure of that iniquitous justice which 'turns judgment into wormwood,' its frigid visage blue-cold and serpent-scaled, with darkly-gleaming eyes full of malignity, and passionless mouth armed with venomous fangs. Subordinate to these four there rise up, on the left-hand margin, three other heads, which complete the seven—one crowned, one mitred, and one coronetted. Such are the thunderous features of this transcendent and marvellous vision, without parallel in imaginative art.

351. 'How frail, men, things! how momentary both!  
Fantastic chase, of Shadow's haunting shades.'

A shadowy male figure chases through grey vacancy a similar shadowy female form. Most striking for weird effect and the swift impetuosity of the filmy shapes, which are drawn with a white outline, left bounded on both its sides by the sharp edge of the grey wash upon which they are projected.

352. 'Fame's trumpet seldom sounds, but like the knell  
It brings bad tidings! how it hourly blows  
Man's misadventures round the list'ning world.'

A mighty flying female figure of Fame trumpeting, to a greedy-eared crowd below her, the story of others' misadventures, her great wings expanded, and full of eyes and ears.

359. 'A wilderness of joys! perplexed with doubts,  
And sharp with thorns.'

A charmingly tender composition, in which a fond mother restrains and warns her eager child, who stretches out her little untaught hand to pluck a rose beset with piercing thorns.

361. Brazen-coloured Falsehood subtly encircles with her burnished serpent tail the steps of a gentle youth to whom she feigns to act as kind instructress, directing him to the example of one who, to the waist, appears a venerable and religious elder, with his hands clasped in adoration, but whose monstrous lower parts, as of a steel-clad dragon, reveal his devilish parentage. A female, with finger on her lip, appears behind him, and seems to caution the monster from betraying himself by an unguarded word. This woman dressed in crimson is the World—his mistress.

372. 'The mighty Cæsar crowned  
With laurels, in full senate greatly falls,  
By seeming friends, that honour and destroy.'

Slightly drawn, but terribly effective in the concentrated rush of the descending daggers of the conspirators upon the prostrate figure of Cæsar, laurel-crowned, covering his face with his robe of imperial purple.

374. Black Hatred, gnawing his nails, armed and seated on a mount of ice, his feet upon the breast of a slain and lovely youth, whose body, seen in profile, lies across the page in a serpentine line after a manner several times repeated in these volumes.

377. 'Wealth may seek us ; but wisdom must be sought ;  
Sought before all.'

In this simple and noble design, Blake's thoughts wander from the abstractions of the English poet to the dramatic figures of 'The Song of Songs.'

We see, in the grey night, 'the watchmen that go about the city' bearing their lanterns and staves, to whom the white bride, wandering in distraught and anxious search, seems to address the question, 'Saw ye him whom my soul loveth ?'

378.

Little children throng around the feet of Christ as the Good Shepherd, learning of the meek and lowly One ; sheep and lambs mingle with them, and a lovely hint of pastoral landscape appears beyond.

383.

'Go fix some weighty truth ;  
Chain down some passion.'

Rising from the open Bible, which has nerved it to resolve, the Soul, a beautiful female figure, seizes a deformed and fiery-hoofed evil spirit, whom she holds down with resistless force, and binds, spite of its beating wings and struggles to escape.

385. 'Retire and read thy Bible to be gay.'

A lamp-lit tent beneath a starry sky, within which a young man on his knees holds at arm's length 'The Book,' a beautiful cherub figure supporting it from behind, while another crowns him with a garland of fresh roses.

388.

Conscience, black-robed and white-stoled, as before, but without the red hood, lies dead, pierced with an arrow shot by a youth, who recoils, scared at his reckless deed.

389.

'The man is dead who for the body lives,  
Lured by the beating of his pulse, to list  
With ev'ry lust that wars against his peace.'

A dwarf, gaudily attired in a fantastic military dress, with asses' ears and cloven feet, gaily beats a drum in accompaniment to another bestial figure playing on a fife. A young man follows them, entranced with the stirring air.

395.

Man lies by a rock-bound shore, his thoughts flying forth from him, in likeness of delicate airy figures driven by the wind to perish in the endless sea as soon as born.

396.

A bloated figure of a triple-crowned pope, again drawn as with sightless eyes ; his scarlet robe just lifted reveals a cloven foot, which a monk kneels to kiss.

400.

'Now see the man immortal : . . .  
The world's dark shades, in contrast set, shall raise  
His lustre more ; though bright, without a foil.'

Similar in motive to the drawing numbered 251. The spiritually-minded man lifted on the summit of a mountain and bathed in morning light. Beneath, float thick mists, under whose dismal

shade a close-pressed herd of men are gathered in the steaming vale.

405.

Earth, always figured as a woman attired in pale crimson wherever the impersonation occurs in the latter numbers of these designs, here reclines upon the round world, and stretches out temptingly a crown and sceptre to a noble male figure, who, turning away, rejects her seductions.

407.

‘Wit

She'll sparkle, puzzle, flutter, raise a dust,  
And fly conviction in the dust she raised.’

Arrayed in gay yellow dress, with gauzy, iris wings, Wit, with one hand stopping her ear to Reason's plea, with the other lifts her mask mockingly from her face as she flutters fleetly away in a cloud of dust which she raises to cover her retreat.

469.

‘There is, I grant, a triumph of the pulse,  
A dance of spirits, a mere froth of joy.’

Revellers recline around a wine-bowl; gyrating in mazy ring on its narrow edge dance a troop of spirits. The bowl, black without, and filled with red wine, casts a deep shadow on the board from a hellish light above, where glowers a bat-winged fiend (his face half hidden by the squared text). Warm-coloured clouds fill the page on either side, amid which sport minute figures, the mad freaks and fancies of intoxication.

410.

On the opposite page the bowl lies shattered on the festive board, the gay spirits that whirled around its ring lie drowned in the broken fragment of its bottom. The warm clouds have changed to chilling vapours, and over the stupefied and prostrate revellers rises into full view the horror of the demon Nemesis.

## NIGHT THE NINTH.

‘The Consolation.’

Is prefaced by a pretty invention of a white-robed child mounting heavenwards on a golden singing-bird, who, calling to its naked fellow below that sports upon a butterfly's wings, seeks to win him to partake his own aspiration.

260. ‘To know ourselves diseased is half our cure.’

In a white veil and grey dress, the woman with the issue of blood, ghastly pale, stoops and stretches out her hand to touch the hem of Christ's garment, who walks before, a child attendant on either side His steps, one of whom looks up reverently in His face.

422.

Three furies, two of the awful triad are fully seen, howling with direful eyes and long unkempt locks as they peal out the knell of fate, one foot of each in the great loop which ends the bell-ropes, which, with their hands, they grasp in terrible energy of action. The foremost one is dressed in yellow, the others in grey and purple.

434. 'Then as a king deposed disdains to live,  
He falls on his own scythe; nor falls alone.  
His greatest foe falls with him. Time and he  
Who murdered all Time's offspring, Death, expire.'

Pierced with his own dart, Death lies extended, his awful head towards the spectator. Beside him, falling on his own mighty scythe, Time receives his final stroke.

Slight and hasty, but not unworthy of the tremendous theme.

345. On the page facing, 'Awful Eternity! offended queen! now reigns alone,' holding an open book and throned on the corpses of the once mighty arbiters of man's fate, Time and Death.

437. Another repetition of the motive of the 'Sons of God shouting together for joy.' Many cherubim against a golden glory, with uplifted hands, praising God.

444. 'When Pain can't bless, Heaven quits us in despair.'

A pallid and aged man kneels in praise, while a strong figure of Pain binds him about with piercing thorns. The scene a rocky wilderness.

446. One breadth of soft grey gloom, in which floats Night, a lovely female form, star coronetted; with loosely flowing cloudy hair radiating from her person on every side; she wears an azure girdle gemmed with stars, and bears a star in the expanded palm of her right hand.

457. 'One sun by day, by night ten thousand shine.'

A design of radiant and supernatural beauty. The stars above personified by beautiful youths with golden urns, from which they pour forth silver streams of flowing light, which all converge into the rapt eyes of the adoring mortal below, kneeling with arms crossed upon his breast.

459. Remarkable for the loveliness of a floating female figure of a planet, carrying two infant stars in her arms.

462. A brilliant rushing crowd of personated stars descend and, grasping men, turn their heads forcibly to view the bright witness which they bear to their Creator. One, an old man, thrusts the heavenly monitors away; another wilfully covers his eyes with his hands.

473. Chance, footless, crowned with butterfly head-dress, and bearing a rose wreath, fleets across the grey, wild sea, over which, cloud-throned, sits old, blind Fate, his hand grasping a black chain, which he sinks into the watery depth.

474. Only the back of the figure is seen, yet how fervently expressive of awe and admonition is this kneeling Ezekiel, his prayer-joined hands just seen above his head. Before him, with mysterious whirl, as of creation's throes, is seen 'the great cloud, and the fire involving itself, and the colour of amber,' and the

mystic revolution of the high and dreadful interlacing beryl wheels, set full of burning eyes, within which, ranged in stately order, stand the golden-winged cherubim, crying, 'Holy, Holy, Holy.'

502.

A tiny vessel tossed on a dark stormy sea. The giant Orion rises in colossal majesty, untroubled and unchanged in all his starry constellation, over the restless horizon.

504.

'With the bold comet, take my bolder flight  
Amid those sovereign glories of the skies.'

The Spirit of Man in form, as a figure, wonderful in impetuous ravishment of admiration, borne upward in the tail of a great comet, and, grasping its streaming fiery hair with both hands, searches the wonders of the starry spheres.

507. 'Can rage for plunder make a God?'

A laurel-crowned, scale-armoured brazen statue of a Warrior, his foot upon the head of a sunken victim, stands upon an altar, beneath which a group of men circle in adoration.

512.

'Great Vine! on Thee, on Thee the cluster hangs;  
The filial cluster; infinitely spread.'

Thickly hung with clustering grapes a rich vine surrounds the figure of Christ: angelic and human intelligences, all dependent on Him, mingle in its branches.

514.

A stupendous fantasy, which shows the Soul stooping over the abyss, and with finger pointing to the stars, questioning dim old Chaos, a huge amorphous shade, concerning the original of their bright existence.

526.

A young maiden stoops over the flowers of the field which, as a multitude of gay tiny beings, point their spiry hands aloft, testifying to the great Author of their loveliness.

527.

Christ as the Creative Word. All created existences, as innumerable infant forms, fly towards Him as their centre and axis; one baby form nestles in his breast.

529. Christ as the Creator of Man.

Boldly figuring the primeval division between the waters and the dry land, a seething sea fills the foreground, its shore a mound of dark red earth, on which lies, fresh formed, the body of the first man, so moulded with bent knees and clasped hands that the first action of the yet unquickened clay must be adoration of its Maker. Over it stoops the Eternal Word; His omnipotent hand touches the godlike brow, while into its nostrils He breathes the breath of life, and, lo! the dark, ruddy clay pales in the face, the hue of life appears, the upturned eyes confess their Lord, and the opening lips give utterance to the first human words of wondering praise.

532.

'At thy good hour,  
Gently, ah gently, lay me in my bed—  
My clay cold bed.'

Exquisitely tender. Four angels at the corners of an open

grave hold between them the corpse of an old man shrouded in a winding sheet which stretches above the grave in one long soft curve. Above, the Saviour appears with expanded arms, and armed evil spirits fly—discomfited.

535.

Christ, in white robe and dazzling glory, stands, about to knock at the door of a house, within which a young man, watching with lighted lamp, hears his Lord's approach, ere he knocks, and seems on the point of leaping forward with eager feet to admit Him. Two other watchers attend behind.

537.

‘When Time, like he of Gaza, in his wrath  
Plucking the pillars that support the world  
In Nature's ample ruins lies entombed.’

A mighty figure of Samson hurling down, with all his force, the upholding pillars of the Philistines' pleasure-house, completes the stupendous task that Blake was set to accomplish when he entered on the commission for these designs.

FREDERIC JAMES SHIELDS.





ESSAY ON BLAKE,  
BY JAMES SMETHAM.



## ESSAY ON BLAKE,

BY JAMES SMETHAM.

*Reprinted from the London Quarterly Review, January 1869.**For a reference to the author of this essay see the Supplementary Chapter to the Life of Blake, Vol. I. pp. 428-9.**The omitted portions are extracts or summaries from the foregoing "Life of Blake," as a review of which the essay originally appeared.*

THE great landscape-painter, Linnell—whose portraits were, some of them, as choice as Holbein's—in the year 1827 painted a portrait of William Blake, the great idealist, and an engraving of it is here before us as we write. A friend looking at it observed that it was "like a landscape." It was a happy observation. The forehead resembles a corrugated mountain-side worn with tumbling streams "blanching and billowing in the hollows of it;" the face is twisted into "as many lines as the new map with the augmentation of the Indies:" it is a grand face, ably anatomised, full of energy and vitality; and out of these labyrinthine lines there gazes an eye which seems to behold things more than mortal. At the exhibition of National Portraits at South Kensington, there was a portrait of the same man by Thomas Phillips; but very different in treatment [see Frontispieces to Vols. I. and II]. The skin covers the bones and sinews more calmly; the attitude is eager, wistful, and prompt. Comparing the

two so fine and so various portraits, you are able adequately to conceive the man, and in both you feel that this awful *eye*, far-gazing, subduing the unseen to itself, was the most wonderful feature of the countenance. It is the countenance of a man whose grave is not to be recognised at this day, while Linnell lives on in venerable age, producing his glorious representations of the phenomena of nature as she appears out of doors; and, we believe, enjoying a large success which he would merit, if for nothing else, as the reward of his kindness to William Blake. \* \* \*

If we wished by a single question to sound the depths of a man's mind and capacity for the judgment of works of pure imagination, we know of none we should be so content to put as this one, "What think you of William Blake?" He is one of those crucial tests which, at once, manifest the whole man of art and criticism. He is a stumbling-block to all pretenders, to all conventional learnedness, to all merely technical excellence. Many a notorious painter, whose canvases gather crowds and realise hundreds of pounds, might be, as it were, detected and shelved by the touch of this "officer in plain clothes." In him there is an utter freedom from pretence. Mr. Thackeray with all his minute perception of human weaknesses and meannesses could not have affixed upon this son of nature any, the smallest, accusation of what he has called "snobbishness." As soon might we charge the west wind, or the rising harvest moon, or the grey-plumed nightingale with affectation, as affix the stigma upon this simple, wondering, child-man, who wanders in russet by "the shores of old romance," or walks with "death and morning on the silver horns," in careless and familiar converse with the angel of the heights. You may almost gather so much if you look on this engraving alone. Say if that upright head, sturdy as Hogarth's, sensitive as Charles Lamb's, dreamy and gentle as Coleridge's, could ever have harboured a thought either malignant or mean? It is a recommendation to the biography. He must have a dull

soul indeed, who, having seen that face, does not long to know who and what the man was who bore it; and it shall be our endeavour, in our humble way, to act as a guide to the solution of the inquiry. But before we give some account of "who," we must be permitted to offer some preliminary reflections, enabling us better to understand "what" he was.

No question in art or literature has been more discussed and with less decisiveness than that of the relations of subject-matter to style or form, and on the view taken by the critic of the comparative value of these relations will depend the degree of respect and admiration with which he will regard the products of Blake's genius. To those who look on the flaming inner soul of invention as being of far more importance than the grosser integuments which harbour and defend it, giving it visibility and motion to the eye, Blake will stand on one of the highest summits of excellence and fame. To those who, having less imagination and feeling, are only able to comprehend thought when it is fully and perfectly elaborated in outward expression, he must ever seem obscure, and comparatively unlovely. There can be no doubt that the true ideal is that which unites in equal strength the forming and all-energising imagination, and the solid body of external truth by which it is to manifest itself to the eye and mind. There are moments when the sincere devotee of Blake is disposed to claim for him a place as great as that occupied by Michael Angelo; when, carried away by the ravishment of his fiery wheels, the thought is lost beyond the confines of sense, and he seems "in the spirit to speak mysteries." In more sober hours, when it is evident that we are fixed, for the present, in a system of embodiment which soul informs, but does not blur, or weaken, or obscure, we are compelled to wish that to his mighty faculty of conception Blake had added that scientific apprehensiveness which, when so conjoined, never fails to issue in an absolute and permanent greatness. But, having

granted thus much, let us not spoil one of the most original and charming of the many joys to be found "in stray gifts to be claimed by whoever shall find" along the meads of art, by hankering after what will not be found, or quarrelling with what we cannot mend. Before we can come to a true initiation into, and an abiding enjoyment of, the domains of representative art, we must have a keen, clear, settled, and contented view of its *limitations*. Far less of the fruitlessness of discontent enters into poetry and literature than into the subject of painting and sculpture. One would think that the reason of this was obvious; yet it is lost sight of continually. Our experience has shown us that there are few who receive from works of a plastic kind a tithe of their power to please, because of their narrow, uncatholic, querulous condition of mind, arising from a false standard and unwarrantable expectations. They will not be at the pains to recollect the wide chasm of difference between a medium in which only that need be told which can be told with truth, and one in which *all* must be told, either truthfully or untruthfully: they will not reflect that the visible phenomena of nature are endless; that absolute perfection requires the presence of the whole series of those phenomena, and that nothing less can produce on the eye the full effect of nature; that the conditions on which representations are made are subject to such an infinity of accidents, that it would take a regiment rather than a single man to catch the mere blush and bloom of any one aspect of nature at any one time. They forget that life is short; health, variable; opportunity, mutable; means, precarious; memory, feeble; days, dark; "models," impracticable; pigments, dull; and media, disappointing.

Let us implore the visitor of gallery and studio to reflect for a while on these inexorable limitations and distinctions, and to endeavour rather to extract pleasure out of what is absolutely *there*, than to repine over the lack of sufficiencies which, probably, if demanded, would be found as incom-

patible with the subject treated as to paint the creaking of a gibbet, or the shriek of a steam-whistle. For our own part, with any such persons we should hesitate until this investigation has been comprehensively and satisfactorily made, to draw forth, on a winter evening, and in the sober quiet of the study, where alone such an action should be performed, that plain, grand, and solemn volume which is called *Illustrations of the Book of Job*, invented and engraved by William Blake. \* \* \* And yet our inward thought on the subject is that in the whole range of graphic art there is no epic more stately, no intellectual beauty more keen and thrilling, no thinking much more celestial and profound.

The history and career of the designer of this noble poem are as interesting as his work. \* \* \* He was a dreamy child and fond of rambling into the country, to Blackheath, Norwood, and Dulwich. His faculties and proclivities were soon enough seen, and in startling forms. He not only imagined, but said that he actually *saw* angels nestling in a tree, and walking among the haymakers in a field.

In these country rambles, we have one of the germs of his peculiar character and genius. Human powers and opportunities act and re-act on each other. The fledgling bird has, enfolded in its bosom, the passion for flight and for song, and realises by foretaste, one might think, as the winds rock its nest, the music of the woods and the rapture of the illimitable air. So there are premonitory stirrings, as sweet and inexpressible, in the breast of the heaven-made child of genius. They are its surest sign. Talent grows insensibly, steadily and discreetly. Genius usually has, in early years, a joyous restlessness, a keen, insatiable relish of life ; an eye soon touched with the 'fine frenzy,' and glancing everywhere. It is—

'Nursed by the waterfall  
That ever sounds and shines,  
A pillar of white light upon the wall  
Of purple cliffs aloof descried.'



It is as various, as incessant, as full of rainbow colour and mingled sound. One of our most unquestionable men of genius tells us how, as a child, landscape nature was effectually haunted to him. The cataract chimed in his ears and sang mysterious songs; the 'White Lady of Avenel' fluttered about his path, or sank in the black swirl and foam of the whirlpool. A child-painter will find it a bliss to notice that the distant hills are of a fine Titianesque blue, long before he knows who Titian was, or has seen a picture. It will give him ineffable joy to see how the valley lifts itself towards the mountains, and how the streams meander from their recesses. He is not taught this; it comes to him as blossoms come to the spring, and is the first mark of his vocation. It was this inward thirst and longing that sent out the boy Blake into the fields and lanes, and among the suburban hills. The force of boyish imagination must have been stronger in him than in most, even of the children of genius, for, as early as the age of thirteen or fourteen, the conceptions of his mind began to assume an external form. He saw a tree sparkling in the sun, and discovered that it was *filled with angels*. When he narrated this event at home, his father was disposed to beat him for telling a lie, and would have done so but for the interposition of his mother. Yet he continued to maintain the substantial truth of his story. In later life he perplexed friends and strangers by his mingling of the inward and outward. He was, on one occasion, "talking to a little group gathered round him, within hearing of a lady whose children had just come home from boarding-school for the holidays. 'The other evening,' said Blake, in his usual quiet way, 'taking a walk, I came to a meadow, and at the further corner of it I saw a fold of lambs. Coming nearer, the ground blushed with flowers, and the wattled cote and its woolly tenants were of an exquisite pastoral beauty. But I looked again, and it proved to be no living flock, but beautiful sculpture.' The lady, thinking that this was a capital holiday-show for her

"children, eagerly interposed, 'I beg your pardon, Mr. Blake, but *may* I ask *where* you saw this?' 'Here, madam,' answered Blake, touching his forehead. The point of view "from which Blake himself regarded his visions was by no "means the mad view those ignorant of the man have "fancied. He would candidly confess that they were not "literal matters of fact, but phenomena seen by his imagination, *realities* none the less for that, but transacted within "the realm of mind." We must say that there is something baffling in this double-minded assertion. That ideas in "the realm of mind" become, where the faculty of imagination is strong, equivalent in importance to realities, is never questioned; it is a waste of our interest and sympathy to claim for them more than a mental life, since no end can be answered by it, unless it be to suggest an unnecessary charge of unsoundness of mind; and, on the other hand, the want of judgment displayed in thus uselessly tampering with the feelings of others exposes a man to a similar charge on different grounds. But even in regard to what is called vision by the inward eye, there are certain limitations which should not be forgotten. Fuseli wished he could "paint up to what he *saw*." We have heard of other instances where this clearness of mental vision was laid claim to, where nevertheless, the artist made abundance of various preparatory sketches. It appears to us that if the interior image does indeed possess the actual completeness of life, there is nothing to do but copy what is before the mind's eye. We know painters of the highest imagination who do not possess this extravagant sensibility and completeness of parts in the regions of conception. They have the animation of a labouring, inward idea, which glimmers before the vision. They have judgment and taste, by which they know when it is successfully translated into outward form. But all the greatest painters have referred to and depended most minutely on the aid of natural models for the whole series of facts by means of which the image was to be realised on canvas.

Young Blake's vision of angels, when analysed, would probably occur in some such way as the following :—It was in no green-topped, suburban tree that he saw the heavenly visitants. We must rather suppose him returning, after the oxygen of the Surrey hill winds had exalted his nerves, among the orchards of some vale into which the last rays of the sun shine with their setting splendours. Here he pauses, leans over a gate, looks at a large, blossom-loaded tree, in which the threads of sunlight are entangled like gossamers which "twinkle into green and gold." A zephyr stirs the cloud of sun-stricken bloom, where white, commingled with sparkling red, flushes over leaves of emerald. Tears of boyish delight "rise from his heart, and gather to his eyes," as he gazes on it. The rays which kindle the blossoms turn his gathered tears to prisms, through which snow-white and ruby blooms, shaken along with the leaf-emeralds, quiver and dance. The impressible brain, already filled with thoughts of the "might of stars and angels," kindles suddenly into a dream-like, creative energy, and the sunny orchard becomes a Mahanaim, even to his outward eye.

So it must have been with that other similar incident. He rambles among hayfields, where white-robed girls, graceful as those whom Mulready has represented in the hay-making scene in Mr. Baring's gallery, are raking the fragrant fallen grass, and singing as they move. There are times when men not particularly imaginative, looking on the bloom of girlhood, and softened by the music of youthful voices, come very near to the illusion by which the imagination raises "a mortal to the skies," or draws "an angel down." Blake, under the enchantment of boyhood and beauty, only took the short remaining stride, and fancy became sufficiently veracious fact. \* \* \*

It was one of the happy circumstances of Blake's career that his parents did not attempt to throw hindrances in the way of his becoming an artist : most men observe with considerable anxiety any traces of special inclination to the

pursuit of art shown by their children, because of the great uncertainty which, no doubt, attaches to the calling. A few words may here be worth setting down on this head. Times have greatly altered in this, as in so many other particulars, since Blake's day. The whole field and apparatus of design have been enlarged. In the year 1767 there was nothing like the variety of occupation for the painter which there is now. In those days the artist, like the poet, had little chance of success unless he were taken by the hand and "patronised," in the old sense of the word. As the likelihood of being thus noticed depended greatly on accident, it was a dangerous risk for a lad to run when he resolved on throwing his life into the pursuit of painting or sculpture. Reynolds was so fortunate as to obtain high patronage early in life, and was of a constitution of mind able to use, without abusing, his opportunities. Wilkie, when only twenty years of age, gained the life-long friendship and support of Sir George Beaumont and Lord Mulgrave. He, too, had that admiration for grand society, and that placid and humble temper, which promoted the stability of such aids to success. Jackson was found on a tailor's shop-board by the same kindly and noble Lord Mulgrave, and was allowed 200*l.* a year to enable him to study, until it became evident such good fortune was ruining him, and the annuity was mercifully withdrawn. No doubt many young painters have been "taken up" by eminent patrons, who have never made their way in life. Patronage will not qualify a painter, though the want of it may prevent the highest abilities from being fairly developed. It is questionable whether even the best early patronage would have enabled Blake to succeed in any high degree. We shall see, as we proceed, that the inherent qualities of his mind—the marked and settled characteristics of his work, chosen and cultivated with a strength of conviction which no opinion of others, no baits of fortune, no perception of self-interest, could have shaken or disturbed—these, as well as the quality of his temper, were such that he never could have

been largely appreciated during his own life. In so far as he becomes more and more recognised, it will be through a medium of interpretation, partly literary, partly artistic, which will enable thoughtful and refined minds to read his works as they read the classics in the dead languages. The lapse of a century has altered all the external conditions of art. There is no longer a need for patronage, in the ancient sense of the word. No painter has to take his turn in Lord Chesterfield's ante-room—pictured for us by E. M. Ward—with the yawning parson, who comes to dedicate his volume of sermons; the widow who wants a place in the charity school for her son; the wooden-legged, overlooked, sea-captain, who indignantly lugs out his turnip of a chronometer; the insolent, red-coated man of the turf, who peers through an eye-glass, fixed on the end of his jockey whip, at the frowning and impatient Samuel Johnson, in snuff-colour, who is perhaps even now chewing the bitter cud of that notable sentence which begins, "Is not a patron my Lord," and ends with the words "encumbers him with help." It is comparatively rarely that an English noble buys the more precious work of the pencil. The men to whom the painter addresses himself with hope are the wealthy merchant, the successful tradesman, the tasteful lawyer, the physician in good practice. While he pushes himself up to the higher levels, most young men of any invention and skill can keep poverty at arm's length by designing on wood for *Punch*, or *Judy*, or the *Illustrated News*, or the *Cornhill Magazine*, or the *Good Words*, or one of that legion of periodicals, weekly and monthly, which bristle with clever woodcuts, and in which, as in an open tilting-yard, young squires of the pencil may win their spurs. Even when the power of invention is not present in a high degree, there is much work of a prosaic kind required, in doing which a fair living may be obtained by a diligent young man of average ability, not to speak of the exceedingly valuable practice afforded by this kind of labour. It seems not unlikely that this field will enlarge. Society is meeting its modern abridg-

ments of time for reading by a rational employment of the arts of illustration—the photograph and the wood engraving. We learn in a glance, nowadays, more than our forefathers learned in a page of print; yet if William Blake had lived in these days of ample opportunity his works would have been equally at a discount. He dealt with the abiding, the abstract—with the eternal, and not the fleeting, aspects of passing life. What the *Book of Job* is to the *Cornhill Magazine*, that was the mind of Blake to ‘the spirit of the age.’

\* \* \* The influence of Blake's solitary Gothic studies during his apprenticeship to Basire is traceable all through his career. While the antique is the finest school for the study of the structure of the human form in its Adamic strength and beauty, the religious sculpture of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries is the noblest material of study for the spiritual powers of form. The faces, though not often realising much delicacy of modelling, have far more expression than in the Greek statues. There is a mingling of ascetic severity, with contemplative repose which transfuses itself into the beholder's mind, and gains upon him stealthily but surely, till he ‘forgets himself to marble.’ These monuments cannot be separated from the piles of wonderful architecture to which they belong. The niche in which a figure of bishop or king is placed is a portion of a great whole. It is usually adapted to its own position and lighting—a most important fact in monumental sculpture. There is a fine passage in Rogers's *Italy* describing the monument by Michael Angelo, where a warrior sits musing in gigantic repose under the shadow of his helmet, which casts so deep a gloom over the upper part of his face that, to the imagination of the beholder, the soul looks out of the frowning shade, and ‘like a basilisk, it fascinates and is intolerable.’ A cast of the same statue may be seen at the Crystal Palace, but not with the same circumstantial advantages. The ghostly fascination of that glooming shadow is gone, though much remains. The power which the statuary of one of our old

cathedrals may acquire over the mind is inconceivable, unless we do as Blake did during this advantageous sojourn in the Abbey, so replenished with the most august memories and images. The verger's voice must cease to echo among the soaring shafts of the nave, the last vibration of the organ must die among the groinings of the roof. An absolute solitude must settle along the marble tombs and into the shadowy recesses. There must be no sounds but those faint, ceaseless, unearthly whispers of which every large cathedral is full—sighs, as it were, of the weary centuries, more stilly and enchainning than utter silence. Some definite object must be before us to hold the mind above the airy fancies of such a loneliness; some brass to be copied; some Templar to sketch and measure in his chain-mail (which the younger Stothard sketched so deliciously), as he lies stark along the dark, time-gnawn marble, or crouching in the panel of a crumbling tomb; or archives to search, and worm-eaten parchments to unroll, among earthy odours. It is after months of such experience as this that we begin to realise the dreadful beauty, the high majesty, of Gothic shrines and their clinging soul of imagination—the soul of many, not of one—of the ages, not of years. Mr. Gilchrist thinks it just possible that Blake may have seen the secret re-opening of the coffin which revealed the face of Edward I., and the ‘yellow eyelids fallen,’ which dropped so sternly over his angry eyes at Carlisle. In Blake's angels and women and, indeed, in most of his figures, we may see the abiding influence of these mediæval studies in that element of patriarchal quietude which sits meditating among the wildest storms of action.

The style of Basire laid the foundation of Blake's own practice as an engraver. It was dry and solid, and fitted for the realisation of strong and abstract pictorial thinking \* \* \* In order to a right view of Blake's organisation, we must from the first bear in mind that he was a poetic thinker, who held in his hands two instruments of utterance—and ‘with

such a pencil, such a pen,' few mortals were ever gifted. The combination of high literary power with high pictorial power is one of the rarest endowments, and it is only among the loftiest order of minds—the Michael Angelos, the Leonardos, and the Raffacelles—that its presence is eminently distinguishable, though by them held in check.

The superb original strength of faculty to which the instrument is an accident, and which is able to work in any field, seems to be among Heaven's rarest gifts.

Of Blake's conditions and limitations as a general thinker we shall have afterwards to speak. Thought with him leaned largely to the side of imagery rather than to the side of organised philosophy; and we shall have to be on our guard, while reading the record of his views and opinions, against the dogmatism which was more frequently based on exalted fancies than on the rock of abiding reason and truth. He never dreamed of questioning the correctness of his impressions. To him all thought came with the clearness and veracity of vision. The conceptive faculty, working with a perception of outward facts singularly narrow and imperfect, projected every idea boldly into the sphere of the actual. What he *thought*, he *saw*, to all intents and purposes; and it was this sudden and sharp crystallisation of inward notions into outward and visible signs which produced the impression on many beholders, that reason was unseated—a surmise which his biographer regards so seriously as to devote a chapter to the consideration of the question 'Mad or not mad?' If we say on this point at once that, without attempting definitions and distinctions, and while holding his substantial genius in the highest esteem, having long studied both his character and his works, we cannot but, on the whole, lean to the opinion that, somewhere in the wonderful compound of flesh and spirit—somewhere in those recesses where the one runs into the other—he was 'slightly touched,' we shall save ourselves the necessity of attempting to defend certain phases of his work, while maintaining an



unqualified admiration for the mass and manner of his thoughts.

Blake's reply to 'Old Moser's' recommendation to study Le Brun and Rubens rather than Michael Angelo and Raffaele gives us an insight into his temper and the strong combative modes of expression which, delivered in quiet tones, for the most part characterised him through life. 'These things that you call finished are not even begun ; how 'then can they be finished? The man who does not know 'the beginning cannot know the end of art.' And the view he here took of pictorial appliances explains most of the theory which embraces his highest excellences and his greatest defects. The living model artificially posed, to his sensitive fancy 'smelt of mortality.' 'Practice and opportunity,' he said, 'very soon teach the language of art. Its 'spirit and poetry centred in the imagination alone never 'can be taught ; and these make the artist.' And again, a still more frank and, to some minds, fatal confession, made in old age, was this : 'Natural objects always *did* and '*do* weaken, deaden, and obliterate imagination in me.' And yet, lest this should tend to lower the reader's interest in the faculty of the painter, let us indulge ourselves by quoting the motto selected for this biography, to show the magnificent way in which he 'lights his torch at Nature's funeral pile :—' I assert for myself that I do not behold 'the outward creation, and that, to me, it is hindrance and 'not action. "What," it will be questioned, "when the 'sun rises, do you not see a round disc of fire, somewhat like 'a guinea?" Oh no, no! I see an innumerable company 'of the heavenly host crying, "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord 'God Almighty!" I question not my corporeal eye, any 'more than I would question a window concerning a sight. 'I look through it and not with it.'

One is reminded, here, of the more solemn adjudication of the relative claims of mystery and understanding given by St. Paul to the Corinthian Church. He does not deny the

validity of the mystery, yet expresses the strong views of a man of practical power. 'I would rather speak five words 'with my understanding, that I might teach others also, than 'ten thousand words in an unknown tongue.' We confess that we can never glance at the wild mysteries of *Thel* and *Urizen* and *Ferusalem* without a frequent recurrence of this somewhat depreciatory phrase, 'ten thousand words in an 'unknown tongue;' and while acknowledging that 'howbeit 'in the spirit he speaketh mysteries,' being strongly disposed to advance our sling-stone of 'five' against the Goliath of 'ten thousand.' It seems to us, also, that there is something misleading in the vague use of the words 'practice and opportunity.' The value of the old phrase 'practice makes perfect,' depends on what we mean by practice; as we take it, it means *the doing again and again of the same kind of thing till we do it rightly*; and opportunity is here to be understood as *the presentation of appropriate and available means*. Form, colour, light and shade, and composition, are the dictionary, the syntax, and the prosody of painting. The thought, the central idea of the picture, corresponds to its realisation, as thinking in words does to grammar. If dictionaries are of no use, and grammar has no relation to thought, then the details of the human or any other form have no relation to painting. Indeed, to deny this is to create a ridiculous paradox, which one may readily illustrate from the works of Blake himself. What his inner eye may see in the rising sun it is not for us to determine, but he has drawn most pathetically in the drama of *Job* both rising and retreating suns. It is true that he has not made them about the size of 'a guinea,' rather their arc spans the gloomy horizon like a rainbow; but it is the segment of a circle—why did he not draw it square or pyramidal? In order to draw at all he was obliged to conform at least to one fact of nature; and, so far as he followed her at all, she did not 'put him out,' as Fuseli affirmed that nature did for him likewise. The case in which he has carried realistic

idealism to its utmost verge is perhaps in the strange design called 'The Ghost of a Flea;' but examine the features of the ghost, and say if, for *material*, he is not indebted first to the baser and more truculent lines of the human skull and nose, and eye and hair, and then to those insect-like elements which he had observed in the plated beetle and the curious fly. The solemn boundaries of form become ridiculous when they wander without enclosing some expressive fact visible to the eye either in heaven above or in earth beneath, and the question only remains, *How much* of this array of fact is needful adequately to convey the *given idea*? Jan Van Huysum would here pronounce a judgment entirely at the opposite pole from that of William Blake; and there is no surer mark of the true connoisseur than to be able to put himself 'en rapport' with the designer, and to judge at once his aim and the degree in which it has been realised. It would introduce a dangerous axiom to say that, in proportion to the grandeur and unearthliness of a thought, the aid of common facts is less needed; it entirely depends on *what* idea and *what* facts are in question. As applied to the human form, and to the highest idealisations of it yet known, and never to be surpassed, it would repay the reader who can see the collections of Michael Angelo's drawings at Oxford, to observe with what grand reverence and timidity that learned pencil dwelt on the most minute expressions of detail, from the crown of the head to the sole of the foot; and it was this abundant *learning* which enabled the far-stretching soul of the mighty Florentine to avoid and to eliminate, amongst a hundred details, all those lines and forms which would not accord with the brooding and colossal majesty of his prophets, the frowning eagerness of his sibyls, the cosmic strength of the first father, or the waving beauty of the mother of us all. A leading principle in Blake's design was that 'a good and firm outline' is its main requisite. The claims of colour *versus* drawing, are not very fully opened out by his practice. Most of his works

were of a kind that singularly divided these elements. Such of his productions as are most delightful in colour are comparatively rude and heavy in outline—and where his line is most sharp and masterly, the element of colour is nearly or altogether absent. His colour, again, was not so much an imitative as a purely decorative agent. The question as to whether the highest qualities of colour are compatible with the highest qualities of form, seems to us to be not so much a matter of abstract possibility as of actual and personal practice. Tintoretto proposed to unite the ‘terrible manner’ and grand drawing of Michael Angelo to the colour of Titian. There seems no reason in the nature of these two elements why they should not be united in the highest perfection; whether any genius will arise who will succeed in doing this remains to be seen. Colour is to drawing what music is to rhythmic words. It is not under every set of conditions that music can be ‘married to immortal verse’ with success. Much depends upon the auditory—much on the apprehension of the musician. There are delights of the eye in colour alone which fully correspond to the delights of melody alone. We may see in so common an object as an old garden-wall and in the compass of a dozen moss-grown or lichen-stained bricks, with the irregular, intervening mortar-lines, such hues and harmonies as will, for a while, give to the trained eye the same delight as a happy air of music gives to the instructed ear. No two red bricks are alike. Some deepen into rich and mottled purples, others kindle into ruddy orange, or subside into greys of the loveliest gradation. These accidental combinations of time-stain and emerald moss-growth with the cloudy hues of the irregular, brick wall, are sufficient of themselves to satisfy an eye open to perceive and understand them. In painting we may observe all manner of pleasant sophistries, which it is a fine holiday amusement to disentangle—arising from these subtle and indefinable relations of the pleasures of colour to the pleasures of form. How often we receive—especially among the smaller and

more sketchy examples of landscape art, the most bewitching impressions from this sophistical play of the elements into each other. Translate some of the sketches labelled 'Evening' or 'Solitude,' into black and white, and their glory would sink into a compost of rude forms, gloomy and incorrect, quite incapable of existing alone. Add the daring tints—the sombre greens, the purples, clouded with fluent ultramarine, the red bands of fire seen between dark tree stems, the amber seas of air, or 'that green light which lingers in the West'—and you are so far imposed upon that you do not dream of questioning the legality of the magic which, by its very intensification of mutual and interchangeable errors, produces on the mind the same sensation wrought on it when beholding the splendid shows of the landscape itself. We are far from believing that the rule and square of mere *literal* truth can be rigidly applied to human reproductions of nature. The difficulty of analysing the great equations, and compensatory powers of art will ever make it an interesting subject of pursuit to the human race. It is a sea whose horizon fades—

'For ever and for ever as we move.'

Even when colour is used in the engraver's sense of black and white alone, these comminglings, as mystic as twilight, retain their power over the eye and fancy. Opposite to page 320, vol. i. of Blake's *Life*, there are three woodcuts which fully illustrate our meaning. They were done to ornament the *Pastorals* of Virgil, edited by Dr. Thornton, and are of a degree of rudeness apparently verging on incapacity. Yet we would venture to ask any competent judge whether an effect in a high degree poetic is not produced by the total sentiment of the design. To our eye they seem to contain a germ of that grandeur and sense of awe and power of landscape which, in some of his works, John Linnell has carried out so finely, where dawn-lights dream over tranquil folds, or evening slowly leaves the valley flock to the peace of night.

And so we have these three grand, but uncouth, blocks printed before us—in one of which the shepherd is eloquent among the ewes and sucking lambs—another where a traveller walks solemnly on among the hills, alone—while in a third ‘the young moon with the old moon in her arms,’ rises over fallen ranks of wheat. Thought cannot fathom the secret of their power, and yet the power is there.

Blake’s reverence for ‘a firm and determinate outline’ misled him chiefly where his works are intended to be elaborately shaded. The importance of right outline to all noble drawing cannot be over-estimated. It must never be forgotten, however, that outline only represents the surface of objects in their extreme confines right and left, above and below, nor that the eye recognises the intermediate spaces with all their projection and depression as clearly as it sees the limit which is called outline.

To take a simple illustration of this. The outline of an egg, with its lovely tapering lines, is primarily needful to record the image of an egg on paper or canvas. If Flaxman draws the egg from which Castor and Pollux issued, the oval boundary is sufficient. It is accepted as a type of the egg, just as the flat figures of his designs from Homer or Hesiod are accepted as the types of men. But the case is altered if the relief of the whole has to be given by shading. An egg all outline in the midst of a shaded design would look as flat as a small oval kite. To produce its proportion of resemblance the outline must be filled with its pale moonshine gradations up to the central ‘high light,’ by means of which the surface appears to swell forward to the eye. These gradations and shaded forms must be in their true place as much as the bounding line, or it will not yield the correct impression. If we apply this rule to each single feature of the human face and figure, we shall see that, while the firm and decided outline must be given correctly, it is only a hundredth part of the truth. Each point of the surface of

the body, if turned sufficiently, would *become* outline, and indeed there is no portion of the exposed superficies which may not be called outline in this sense. It is owing to a one-sided view of the question of drawing, then, that we have to search among the often uncouth and broken shading in the plates of Blake, for that powerful and accurate outline which we are sure, almost universally, to find.\* \* \* It was a fortunate circumstance for Blake, in a professional sense, that he had no children. In many cases, the necessities of a family rouse and develop the resources of the parent mind and discover means of support where none appeared. This would have been impossible with such a nature as Blake's. He might have drudged and slaved at prosaic work with the graver, and so have been prevented from finding his own sphere as an inventor, but he could not have made his works a whit more acceptable to the general taste. He needed no spur; his powers were always awake, always on the stretch; and we have, probably, from his hand all that could ever have been obtained under the most favourable circumstances. Many a man is depressed by poverty and anxiety below the level of his secret capacities. It was not so here. The last touches of his steady graving tool are as cool and strong in the latest of his works as in the earliest. It was not in the power of neglect, or pain, or sickness, or age, or infirmity, to quench a vital force so native and so fervent.\* \* \*

Blake engraved from Stothard and others for the magazines; mortified, sometimes, to see that his own designs had been the foundation, so he said, of the subject he engraved; indeed, Fuseli himself acknowledged that 'Blake was good to steal from.' We may understand the force of this saying, if we only look at a design of early date by Blake, called 'Plague,' engraved in the volume we are reviewing. An inexorable, severe grandeur pervades the general lines; an inexplicable woe, as of Samaria in the deadly siege, when Joram, wandering

on the walls, was obliged to listen to the appeal of the cannibal mother, hangs over it ; a sense of tragic culmination, the stroke of doom irreversible, comes through the windows of the eyes, as they take in the straight black lines of the pall and bier, the mother falling from her husband's embrace with her dying child ; one fair corpse scarcely earthed over in the foreground, and the black funereal reek of a distant fire, which consumes we know not what difficult horror. It is enough to fire the imagination of the greatest historical painter. And yet the manner is so dry, so common, even so uninteresting, and so unlikely to find its way to 'every drawing room-table,' that a man of accomplishments and appreciative powers, but without the 'vision and the faculty divine,' would be sorely tempted to 'convey' the thinking to his own canvas, and array it in forms more attractive to the taste, without being haunted by the fear of his theft being speedily recognised.

When he was a little over thirty years of age Blake collected and published one of his sweetest and most original works, *The Songs of Innocence*, engraving the poem in a singular way with delightful designs on copper. These plates, a remnant of which we have had the good fortune to see, are somewhat like rude, deep-cut casts in copper, from engraved wood blocks. They were drawn on the copper with some thick liquid, impervious to acid ; the plate was then immersed in aquafortis, and 'bitten' away, so that the design remained in relief. These he printed with his own hand, in various tones of brown, blue, and grey, tinting them afterwards by hand into a sort of rainbow-coloured, innocent page, in which the thrilling music of the verse, and the gentle bedazzlement of the lines and colours so intermingle, that the mind hangs in a pleasant uncertainty as to whether it is a picture that is singing, or a song which has newly budded and blossomed into colour and form. All is what the title imports ; and though they have been, of late years, frequently quoted, and



lose half their sweetness away from the embowering leaves and tendrils which clasp them, running gaily in and out among the lines, we cannot but gratify ourselves and our readers with one light peal of the fairy bells :—

‘ Sweet dreams form a shade  
O’er my lovely infant’s head,  
Sweet dreams of pleasant streams,  
By happy, silent, moony beams.

‘ Sweet sleep, with soft down  
Weave thy brows an infant crown !  
Sweet sleep, angel mild,  
Hover o’er my happy child !

‘ Sweet smiles, in the night  
Hover over my delight !  
Sweet smiles, mother’s smile,  
All the livelong night beguile !

‘ Sweet moans, dovelike sighs,  
Chase not slumber from thine eyes !  
Sweet moan, sweeter smile  
All the dovelike moans beguile !

‘ Sleep, sleep, happy child !  
All creation slept and smiled.  
Sleep, sleep, happy sleep !  
While o’er thee doth mother weep.

‘ Sweet babe, in thy face  
Holy image I can trace ;  
Sweet babe, once like thee  
Thy Maker lay, and wept for me ! ’

This is the tone of them ; there are many such strains as these that deserve to be much better known than they are, notwithstanding the bad grammar that mingles with their innocent music. There is a serene unconsciousness of arbitrary human law in genius such as this ; it floats with the lark in a 'privacy of glorious light,' where the grammatical hum of the critics cannot disturb its repose. We are reminded of the startling question of the Yorkshire orator when repudiating the bonds of syntax and pronunciation,—'*Who invented grammar I should like to know ?* I've as much right to invent grammar as any of them !' Whatever we might concede to the Yorkshire orator, we may readily agree not to be inexorably severe in the application of our canons to the productions of such a genius as that of Blake.

There is one design given in this book which affects the eye wonderfully, where huge intertwined trunks writhe up one side of the page, while on the other springs, apparently, Jack's immortal laddered beanstalk, aiming at heaven ; between the two, on the blank white sky, hang mystical verses, and below is a little vision of millennial rest. Naked children sport with the lion and ride the lioness in playful domination, while secure humanity sleeps at ease among them.

Yet Blake had a difficult and repulsive phase in his character. It seems a pity that men so amiable and tender, so attractive to one's desire for fellowship, should prove, on close contact, to have a side of their nature so adamant and full of self-assertion and resistance, that they are driven at last to dwell in the small circle of friends who have the forbearance to excuse their peculiarities, and the wit to interpret their moods and minds :—

'Nor is it possible to thought  
A greater than itself to know.'

In this sphinx-like and musical couplet, Blake himself hits the true basis of the reason why men whose genius is at once

so sweet, so strong, and so unusual, are largely overlooked during life, and are difficult of exposition when the fluctuations and caprices of life no longer interfere to prevent a fair estimate of their powers and performances.

After these exquisite poems, which come nearest to the universal heart, Blake struck off, on his own strange wings, into regions where we will not attempt to follow him. Those who wish to see what may be said for the scope and design of the series of Blake's illustrated mysteries may consult Mr. Swinburne's inquiries into, and eloquent comments on, them. For our own part, their chief value seems to us to consist in fragments of astonishing pictorial invention which they contain, hints and indications of which are given in facsimile in these profusely illustrated volumes. There can be no question that the first impression produced by them is, that they are the production of a madman of superb genius; and this impression is so strong that few people would be persuaded to do more than glance at what would confirm their judgment. Here is one of those firm questions which the man whose mind is unbalanced will ask with unflinching eye. He is talking familiarly to Isaiah. 'Does a firm persuasion that a thing is so, make it so?' What an entangling preliminary question before he ventures to slip the leash of some 'subjective' horror. 'I was in a printing-house in hell.' What a *nonchalant*, passing introduction to a subject. 'My friend the angel climbed up from his station into the mill.' Here is the easy way in which he treats principalities and powers. 'So the angel said, "Thy phantasy has imposed upon me; and thou oughtest to be ashamed." I answered, "We *impose on one another*, and it is but lost time to converse with you, whose works are only analytics."' Here is a man, not exactly a fool, who 'rushes in where angels fear to tread,' and snaps his finger in their faces. There is no wonder if ordinary civilians found such a 'customer' to be difficult to get on with. And yet an unconquerable indifference to his transcendental philosophy does

not in the least interfere with our veneration of the artist, as such. We hold that the 'creative' and the 'critical' faculties are seldom found in close and powerful alliance and that, often, in proportion to the intensity and energy of the former, is the dormancy, if not the incapacity, of the latter. In the procession of his own labours, the artist unconsciously selects or rejects. He is conscious that deep, down in the laws of thought, his justification is to be found, but he has neither time nor inclination to become a pearl diver, when the riches of the

'Eternal deep  
Haunted for ever by the Eternal mind,'

come and pour themselves, unsought, at his feet. A life of analysis and reconstruction he leaves to others, and he is the happiest painter or singer who leaves the philosophies

'On Argive heights divinely sung,'

to the Argives; that is to say, so far as any practical inter-meddling with them is concerned. Even if he be capable of entering the region, he acts most wisely who follows Mr. Ruskin's short advice to a painter, 'Fit yourself for the best company and *keep out of it.*' As to any serious consideration of Blake's vocation to teach aught of morals; of theology, or non-theology; of Christian Atheism, or Atheistic Christianity; we, with 'the volume of the Book,' which 'is written,' in our hands—'calmly, but firmly and finally,' on a general glance at the tone and tenor of these portentous scrolls of *Thel* and *Urizen*, these *Marriages of Heaven and Hell*, which would look blasphemous if we did not tenderly recollect by whom they were written, refuse any serious further investigation of their claims, and must dismiss them, not scornfully, though it may be sorrowfully. We regard them rather as we regard the gentle or exalted incoherences of a dear friend's delirium; for our theory of the mental structure of Blake renders them as harmless to us as his gentle *Songs of*

*Innocence*: but on this ground we dismiss them — repeating the words before applied to them, only with no anger or disdain—that they are ‘*Ten thousand words in an unknown tongue.*’ But not shelving nor ignoring the illuminated pages themselves; their inventive power remains, and they may be regarded as a repository of winged and fiery imagery which will be useful to us in our attempts to realise things invisible, in so far as the elements of matter may bridge over for our conceptive faculties the gulfs between the seen and unseen; and in so far as they may be made to illustrate phases of thought to which they were not, in the first instance, intended to apply. There are many such designs, and we are thankful to see the woodcuts in Chapter XII. given as specimens of what we mean. Take them one by one, suppose no further relation than each has to its significant title, and we are wholly satisfied. We will not say how often, and with what fine effect, one of these rude but noble squares enters before the inner eye, and allies itself with the current stream of thought.

‘Alas!’—that is the simple title of one of them,—a boy chasing winged loves, which he kills with his catching; need we move farther to seek our goal of meaning? ‘*What is Man?*’ That caterpillar, huge and spectral, crawling over the oak leaf under which the baby-faced chrysalis lies, expecting its life and its wings—to be ‘crushed before the moth’ in due time. Can we not find our own sufficient application of such a wondrous image? ‘*I want! I want!*’ Here is ‘the globe’s last verge’ which both Dryden and Blake contrived (but with very different faculties and success) to see; where, according to Dryden, we may behold ‘the ocean leaning on the sky.’ Here Blake, on this hint, boldly heaves his ladder to the hollow bosom of ‘our rolling neighbour,’ the crescent moon, and begins to climb, fearless as Blondin, and cross the star-sown abyss to satisfy his ‘want.’ So with each of these precious little bold and grand designs—the last of which is almost appalling. A white, unearthly figure with

a wand—a figure neither large nor small, for it is of no size to the judgment and imagination—cowers and stares beneath the root of a forest oak; a huge worm winds round before her feet, and the inscription is '*I have said to the worm, Thou art my mother and my sister.*' Surely, any one who ever sat awestruck over the Book of Job, and heard the 'deep sad music of humanity' coming on the long-drawn gust of time from those lands of Uz, would feel that here was one worthy and sufficient interpretation of the idea of the verse, and of those other kindred upbreathings from the grave, and wailings of the haunted 'house appointed for all living,' of which the early chapters of the Book of Job are full.

Laying aside these works as philosophies or preachings, and returning upon them as strange pictures intended for the informing of the imagination through the eye, it is impossible to put into words the delight and restless wonder they excite. We invite the reader to turn to page 109 vol. i. and the opposite page, which is a fac-simile of one of Blake's leaves from *America*, reduced — but by an unerring 'photolithographic' process—to half the size, and printed as nearly as possible in the colour used as a groundwork for his hand-tinting—so that we are looking, in fact, at an autograph. Study carefully the design on the upper part of the left-hand page. By a sheer breadth of black, sharply contrasted with the white page, there is, by some inexplicable magic, conveyed the impression of a space in the upper skies, where—coming we know and care not whence, and hasting we know not whither—is a wild swan, bridled and mounted by an elf, into whose history and significance we shall never trouble ourselves to inquire. But we appeal to the intelligent observer whether that design does not kindle the page into a silver light, and hasten the spirits into a breezy swiftness of enjoyment, and strike the harp of memory within him, making him, perhaps, recall the fine image, in the 'Palace of Art'—

'For as the wild swan wings to where the sky  
Dipt down to sea and sands.'

It is in this, as in ten thousand other ways, that the pencil becomes the gorgeous sister and handmaiden of the poet's pen, kindling into inciting suggestion his flying images, and doubling the value of his priceless words. The eye is irresistibly drawn below to the bottom of the page; and what a rich and rare sense of visual joy comes as we see that serpent 'dragon of the prime,' coming carelessly from nowhere, and going, by shining cloud and crescent and sparkling star, into the emptiness of night, his tail curled, against all nature, into a writing-master's flourish, his sole apparent object being to oblige three merry fairies with a morning ride! We pray you look at his eye and mouth! How he enjoys the fun, and what a large reserve of cunning meaning there is all over his corrugated face as he puts out his forked tongue, most probably at the metaphysicians, or, however ungratefully, at Blake's manuscript itself. Turn to the other page from *America*. Its relations to the great Republic seem remote to the sense. Yet in the 'tall talk' in the centre of the design—the strong and terribly bloodshot tone of which is greatly subdued by the pretty little twirls and twiddles into which its letters run—we see a foreshadowing of at least an *accusation* against America; and in the capacity of the genii, who weigh all creation in their own scales, and fly away with the sword of the earth, and fling world-powers into the void as easily as Athamas dashed Learchus in pieces, and who perform Blondin feats on 'Serpents of Eternity,' instead of tight-ropes, between spires of rushing flame, ascending out of the abyss, we see allusions closer than we might at first suppose to the 'greatest people on the face of the earth.' Yet their chief value does not lie in this. It is the mysterious fascination of 'line'—the mingling of creative might and child-like play—the astonishing power which dark and strongly imprinted curves can give—'*lucus a non lucendo*'—the sense of flashing flame—the power to 'make black seem white,'—which so enchains and half stupefies the fancy. As a specific example of this, look at what we may

call 'the prophecy of Blondin,' the Herculean tumbler on the Serpent of Eternity. How amazingly grand the lines! Carve it in onyx, and have we not an antique gem of the first water,—Phidias and Michael Angelo in little? Yet pass below the giant acrobat's elbow, and Michael Angelo subsides into a schoolboy finishing his little theme with an innocent flourish. This is Blake all over. Now he is a Titan hurling rocks at the gods—now a chubby boy toddling to the infant-school and singing his pretty, echoing song.

Besides these books and 'prophecies,' Blake made many designs of a separate or serial kind, and found in Mr. Butts a kind, steadfast, and appreciative patron. For nearly thirty years the modest, simple-living Blake found a constant resource in this worthy friend's patronage. It is a beautiful picture of his typical life of Arcadian simplicity and sufficiency to see this plain liver and high thinker taking his weekly design to sell for a very moderate price, and returning to dream, and draw, and engrave in his own humble home. Out of this simple life issued, in 1794, the *Songs of Experience*. Flaxman used to exclaim, 'Sir, his poems are as grand as his pictures;' and Wordsworth 'read them with delight.' Yet words do not tell the half of Blake's poems—do not reveal half the man. Some pieces will bear separation from the rainbow pages on which they originally appeared; others, and most of them, lose half their thrill and motion when enchained in the printer's 'forme.' When the brown poem and rough ground-lines of the design were stamped on the rough paper by the rude press, then his lyrical fingers, playing with the prisms of water-colour, washed and touched all over them in a way not to be described—poem and picture twined fondly round each other, in a bath of colour and light, refusing to be separated. So that he who is to understand Blake must be admitted to the penetralia where such sights are to be seen. Not that he had any special aim at exceptional seclusion. 'Come in' he would say, 'it is only Adam and Eve,' as in an anecdote narrated at length by Mr.



Gilchrist, which adds another proof of our theory that a veil of innocent unreason spread its haze over one side of his nature. Surely by this time the little poem which begins—

‘Tiger, tiger, burning bright  
In the forests of the night,’

and which Charles Lamb called ‘glorious,’ is pretty well known, as also the song beginning—

‘Piping down the valleys wild.’

The exceeding delicacy and sweetness of some separate verses in his poems convey that sense of enchantment which Scott describes as coming over him at any recurrence of the stanza

‘The dews of summer night did fall,  
The moon, sweet regent of the sky,  
Silvered the walls of Cumnor Hall,  
And many an oak that grew thereby.’

It is hard to say in what this happy quality consists. To our own mind there is something of it in a song by Bulwer in the *Last Days of Pompeii*, beginning,

‘By the cool banks where soft Cephisus flows,  
A voice sailed trembling down the waves of air.’

To which Blake’s ‘Song to the Muses,’ might have given the key-note:—

‘Whether on Ida’s shady brow,  
Or in the chambers of the East,  
The chambers of the sun that now  
From ancient melody have ceased;

‘Whether in Heaven ye wander fair,  
Or the green corners of the earth,  
Or the blue regions of the air,  
Where the melodious winds have birth;

‘Whether on crystal rocks ye rove  
 Beneath the bosom of the sea,  
 Wandering in many a coral grove ;  
 Fair Nine, forsaking Poetry ;

‘How have you left the ancient love  
 That bards of old enjoy’d in you !  
 The languid strings do scarcely move,  
 The sound is forced, the notes are few.’

There is this ineffable charm of scenery and sound in these lines from ‘Night’ :—

‘Farewell, green fields and happy grove,  
 Where flocks have ta’en delight ;  
 Where lambs have nibbled, silent move  
 The feet of angels bright ;  
 Unseen, they pour blessing,  
 And joy without ceasing,  
 On each bud and blossom,  
 And each sleeping bosom.

‘They look in every thoughtless nest,  
 Where birds are covered warm ;  
 They visit caves of every beast,  
 To keep them all from harm :  
 If they see any weeping  
 That should have been sleeping,  
 They pour sleep on their head,  
 And sit down by their bed.’

The same simple and tender mood of soul that originated such child-melodies as ‘Gentle Jesus, meek and mild,’ which brings tears down the cheeks of the ruggedest sailor, and has touched the secret fount of tears in many an unconfessing heart, handled this ‘rural pen’ and ‘stained that water clear’ and wrote that happy song—

‘Every child shall joy to hear.’

To such influences grown men, also, do well to keep open their souls ; for Blake in his ' Auguries of Innocence,' writes—

'He who mocks the infant's faith  
Shall be mock'd in age and death.'

There is so much pleasure in copying out some of these fragments that we are tempted to linger a little longer over them. The silver Shakespearean song of 'Take, O take those lips away!' has always sounded like a honey-laden breeze of Hymettus. There is the same nameless spell in these words of Blake, rolled sweetly on each other as the rose-leaves curl toward the heart of the rose :—

'Never seek to tell thy love,  
Love that never told can be,  
For the gentle wind doth move  
Silently, invisibly.'

Here are two stanzas, not so remarkable for their pure melody, but containing a wonderfully felicitous image :—

'Mock on, mock on, Voltaire, Rousseau,  
Mock on, mock on ; 'tis all in vain ;  
You throw the sand against the wind,  
And the wind blows it back again.

'And every sand becomes a gem  
Reflected in the beams divine ;  
Blown back, they blind the mocking eye,  
But still in Israel's paths they shine.'

In a motto prefixed to the 'Auguries of Innocence,' he expresses that power which is given to genuine imagination, and which so distinctively separates it from the rest of the faculties, or rather enables it both to use, and master, and transcend them all—the power

'To see a world in a grain of sand,  
And a heaven in a wild flower,  
Hold infinity in the palm of your hand,  
And eternity in an hour.'

Thus we are led on by their alluring sweetness, as we are led from bush to bush by the piping of a bird of unusual note and brilliant plumage.

But our material swells beyond expectation, and we must return to Blake's history. \* \* \* While the designs to *The Grave* were in execution, Blake got hold of a magnificent subject, of which Cromek had the wit to feel the value.

Out of the whole range of modern literature no more picturesque, ample, or central theme could be discovered than the *Canterbury Pilgrimage* of Chaucer. A fine passage from the hand of the discoverer of this admirable subject, in what seems to us the best prose document remaining from his pen, shows the dignity of the conception. [See p. 143.]

The *Canterbury Pilgrimage* of Blake is, we regret to say, on the whole, a failure, in our judgment, as to execution. The conception and composition are stately and strong. It might be taken from an early fresco in some 'Campo Santo.' But the horses, which he says 'he has varied according to their riders,' are so variously like what the Trojan horse might be, and so liable to be thought like what the less epic rocking-horse usually is—there is such a portrait-like grim stare on all the faces—such a grotesque and improbable quality about the 'Wife of Bath,' who is something between a jewelled Hindoo idol and the ugly Madonna of a wayside shrine—that we cannot help feeling how, in spite of a hundred redeeming virtues of strength and grandeur, all the effort in the world would fail to recommend it to the general eye. Yet, as a quaint, 'most ancient,' and delightful ornament for a dim oaken staircase, we recommend its purchase to all who can by any means procure a copy of it.

Blake's designs from Blair's poem, *The Grave*, were dedicated to the Queen of England as

'What I have borne on solemn wing  
From the vast regions of the grave.

These words are truthful enough.

As the book is more readily to be seen than any other of Blake's works, we will not here speak of them *in extenso*; but we cannot help feeling, as we write, the wave of that 'solemn wing,' nor seeing, far stretching into the dimness of oblivion, the sights which Blake unveiled in those 'vast regions of the grave.' 'Kings and counsellors of the earth, which built desolate places for themselves; and princes that had gold, and filled their houses with silver,' lying side by side, with awful, open gaze, in the dusky silence, waiting for the trumpet of final awaking. Infancy, youth, manhood, and age, trooping hurriedly downward into the bleak darkness and 'monumental caves of death.' The huge, Herculean struggle of 'the wicked strong man' against the victorious impalpable 'shadow with the keys;' the sweet 'soul hovering over the body;' the pictured realisation of Burns's tender wish—a family found at last—

'No wanderer lost—  
A family in heaven;'

above all, that elevating vision—worthy of the Sistine roof—where Age, 'a-leaning on his crutch,' is driven by the last stress of the furious tempest of life into the Gate of Death; but where, overhead, 'young and lusty as the eagle,' the new-born, immortal, worshipping man of the skies kneels in the radiance of the supernal sun of eternity. This book was, indeed, a fit overture to that still greater oratorio of *Job*, with which, as if accompanied by a mighty Miltonic organ, the master virtually concluded his pictured lays.

It is to the thoughtful, self-denying kindness of the venerable John Linnell that we owe the production of the *Illustration of the Book of Job*. Will it be believed that Blake was nearly seventy years old when this marvellous series of designs was commenced? Before being permitted to handle its solemn pages, every spectator ought to be forewarned and instructed that these designs are the latest products of a hand growing stiff with age, and verging on immortality; and should approach them with something of the reverence with

which the young ought to 'rise up before the grey hairs. It is true that the drawings for the series were made when he was in the vigour of life. But every line of these plates was cut directly by the patient, wrinkled hand. He was poor, though contented, at this period of life. He had struggled through years of shameful and Bœotian neglect into the valley of age and decline. Even his patron, Mr. Butts, was alienated from him. The Royal Academy had given him a grant of £25 out of its funds, showing that want was endeavouring to stare him out of countenance. At this juncture John Linnell stepped forward and gave the commission, at his own risk, for the execution of these designs from the *Book of Job*. In pleasant little instalments of from £2 to £3 per week was the simple and frugal Old Master paid, while, day by day, the sharp graver cut these immortal lines.

At this time he was like a simple stoic philosopher, surrounded, in his one room in Fountain Court, Strand (how very strange a place for such a work!—one would have thought them rather to have been graven among the mountains and Druidic cairns), by a little band of loving disciples, some of whom are amongst us at this day—two at least well known to fame—George Richmond, the eminent portrait-painter, and Samuel Palmer, whose profoundly poetic water-colour landscapes are still to be seen, year by year, on the walls of 'The Old Water-Colour Society.' No *profits were realised by the engravings—their sale hardly covering expenses*. The price of *Paradise Lost* will occur to the literary reader as he sighs over the last sentence; but, regardless of mere money success, the old man ploughed over his last fields as the sun of life stood red in the horizon, and the vale darkened beneath his feet. The 'long patience' of this stalwart son of toil and imagination endured to the end, and saw no earthly reward. The thin, enduring furrows of these 'inventions,' traced by the ploughshare of his graver, have borne fruit since then; but not for him, nor for her he left behind.

We must not attempt a full description of these inventions.

Let us again say, that the style of their execution is of that intense, primeval, severe, and unaffected kind most suited to reproduce scenes of the early world ; but bare and dry, and as if centuries had eaten into their substance, and left them as the torrent streams are left among the barren heights. If, with this explanation, the engravings (reduced in the second volume of this biography, but exact facsimiles of the things themselves) should greatly disappoint the observer, let him pass by them, and go forward to something more congenial. Their Runic power and pathos is not for him. Each design has a border, which is a sort of outlined commentary, in harmony with the subject, and often allusive to it. It opens with a family picture of the patriarch, his wife, and children, gathered under a vast tree—the parents sitting, the sons and daughters kneeling in worship ; the ‘homestead’ is seen beyond close-packed flocks of sheep: Some rams of the flock and lambs of the fold lie in the foreground, while the great sun sets and the crescent moon rises over heights stormy and barren. In the next, the vine and fig-tree of home—angel-guarded—overshades the luxurious ease of family love ; but above this tender vision is one more awful. The ‘Ancient of Days (who is to be read by the instructed eye in his cramped grandeur rather as an unlettered *symbol* of Divinity, than as a *representation*) sits upon His throne, closed in by clouds and bowing cherubim, while Satan presents his malignant plea. It is granted ; and in the succeeding scenes he works his fiery will. The darkening page seems to crackle with sulphurous and sudden flame ; the strong pillars tremble, and lurch, and fall, crushing the lovely and the strong under their ruins. The rampant, rejoicing demon dances on the cornices, and flaps his dragon wings in glee ; while, in the margin, strange glints of issuing claws and eating fires crawl upward. Then the Messengers are seen precipitating themselves one by one on the astonished eye of the patriarch and his wife. In the border, Satan walks majestically on the circle of the earth, and round and below

him the lightning shivers, 'the all-dreaded thunder-stone' explodes, and the billowing waves of fire still curl and creep threateningly. Nevertheless, we see, farther on, the patient man—still with his attendant angels (so like the angels of Fra Angelico!)—relieving the poor as before; but the landscape is bereaved and desolate, and over the sharp stern ridges of the hills the sky encloses another heavenly conclave. The Father of Heaven and His shrinking hosts watch how Lucifer, in his wrath, gathers in his hand the bottles of heaven into one pliant orifice, from which he sprinkles plagues and pains on the head of Job. The outline comment shows us the now manifest dragons of the pit, with sombre eyes, among thorns and piercing swords of flame, which are soon to strike through his bones and flesh.

And again we see the faithful servant of God laid low. There is no vision in the upper air—all is cold and vaporous gloom. The bellying cloud becomes a reservoir of agony, wielded like a huge wine-skin of wrath, and poured, as before, on the overthrown form upon the ground. The sea blackens, and the mighty rims of the setting sun seem to depart in protest. The scathed hills and scattered ruins against which the now predominant Adversary rears himself, are abandoned by all blessing, while his unholy feet trample the righteous man into the dust. There is a series of symbols of lament in the border—a broken crook, a restless, complaining grasshopper, the toad and the shard, the thistle and the wounding thorn. Then come the friends, with uplifted hands and sorrowful eyes; while some strange, darting horizon-light, like a northern aurora, cuts out into gloomy relief the black mountain, which rises beyond a city desolate as Tadmor in the wilderness. The patriarch, sitting on his dunghill, in the following design, spreads upward his pleading, appealing, protesting hands, while the friends bow beside the dishevelled wife, and speak never a word. Light is withdrawn; clouds steam from the rock; and below, in the border, the dull fungus spreads its tent where evil dews drip on berries of



poison. Still following down the darkening steps of grief, we behold the 'terror by night'—described by Eliphaz—transacted in vision over a crouching group of the bereaved pair and their friends. The hair of his head stands up, while an apparition, dignified and ominous, walks, arrayed with white nimbus and fire-darting cloud. Then, again, Job kneels, and the six scornful hands of his friends are levelled against his expanded Neptunian breast like spears, as he proclaims his integrity; and worse than this, the fearful hissing whisper of the over-tempted wife of his bosom rises to his ear, bidding him to curse God and die.

That is not the extremest depth of his woe. All hell seems to hurtle over his couch in the succeeding design; jointed lightnings splinter amidst a lurid gloom; demons throng the chamber, and shake their chains by the bed; innumerable tongues of fire search through and through what should be the place of rest; while the arch-enemy—now transformed into a voluminous incubus, serpent-wreathed, presses down in thunderous imminence upon his very soul, as foul and fiendish arms grasp the limbs of Job, longing to hurry him away. The border is now *all fire*, which wavers and soars triumphantly, as over a sacked city. Our memory recalls a fine MS. stanza, by a friend, which expresses the sentiment of this dark picture:—

!
   
' My bones are filled with feverish fire,  
 My tongue hath nigh forgot to speak,  
 My couch is like a burning pyre,  
 My heart throbs wildly e'er it break.  
 O God, my God, to Thee I pray,  
 Help me—no other help I know;  
 I am full of tossings to and fro  
 Until the dawning of the day.'

But now a calm falls on the scene of sorrow. Heads are uplifted. Elihu, the son of Barachel the Buzite, speaks, and the vast stars shine around his head out of the black pall of night. All eyes rest on him, except those of the despairing wife.

‘There is a listening fear in their regard’

as he speaks, saying, ‘When He giveth quietness, who then can make trouble?’ A lovely marginal illustration shows, as it were, the beginning of a new hope. From the prostrate figure of the saint, on whose bosom hope seems to lie dead, there is a gradual lifting-up of little angel-thoughts which, rising higher and higher, at last disappear on their way to the throne of God. There follows a subject of amazing grandeur—God speaks out of the incumbent wreaths of the whirlwind; and in the outer space there are sketchings that seem to represent the very roots of creation, while its boiling energies appear to overflow above. Now the elder sons of God sing together with clapping wings among the studded stars; the Almighty spreads His arms of command, and the coursers of the morning leap forth; the silent-rushing dragons of the night issue into its purple hollows, and, as it were, hidden in ‘a vacant interlunar cave,’ Job and his friends behold and meditate on these things. And again on other wonders: Behemoth tramps the earth; Leviathan wallows in the deep. Then, farther on, ‘Satan falls as lightning from heaven;’ the shadows flee; the sweet returns of the Divine favour brighten on the head of Job, while they flash condemnation on the heads of his sceptical friends. Still farther, the altar of grateful sacrifice sends its pyramid of flame into the heaven of heavens.

In the border of this invention are drawn, curiously enough, a palette and pencils and a graver. We never see this without surmising some personal allusion in it, and thinking of George Herbert’s poem of *The Flower*—

‘Who would have thought my shrivelled heart  
 Could have recovered greenness? It was gone  
 Quite underground: as flowers depart  
 To see their mother-root when they have blown,  
     Where they together  
     All the hard weather  
 Dead to the world keep house unknown.’

‘And now in age I bud again,  
After so many deaths I live and write ;  
I once more smell the dew and rain,  
*And relish versing.* O my onely Light !  
It cannot be  
That I am he  
On whom Thy tempests fell all night !’

How sweet and grave is the next chapter of the story.

Dappled lights break over the newly-fruited fig-tree ; corn waves in the morning wind. Subdued, but with more than his old dignity, the restored patriarch unresentfully and thankfully receives from ‘every one a piece of money.’

Time flows on, and in future years we look on him once again. In ‘a chamber of imagery,’ frescoed round with reminiscences of the long past ‘days of darkness,’ Job sits. Three daughters, more lovely than those he had lost, clasp his knees, while he, with longer waving beard, and an aspect of deeper eld, recounts—his arms wide floating in grateful joy—the story of his trial and his deliverance.

In the last scene of all, a full-voiced pæan rises. Under the aged oak, where we saw the former family gathered in prayer, we now see, standing in the exultation of praise, a group of sons more strong and active, of daughters more beautiful and sweet. The psalm swells on the evening air ; resonant harp keeps time with warbling lute ; the uplifted silver trumpets peal ; the pastoral reed soothes the close-crowding, white-fleeced flocks ; a crescent rises as of yore ; while the sun, darting its rays to the zenith, sinks over the hills of God, who blesses ‘the latter end of Job more than the beginning.’

If we might have our wish, we would select some accessible but far removed, quiet vale where Corinthian capitals could never intrude. Here we would have built a strong, enduring, greystone simple building of one long chamber, lighted from above. This chamber should be divided into niches. In each niche, and of the size of life,

there should be done in fresco, in low tones of simple, deep colour, one of these grand designs, inlaid in a broad gold flat, which should be incised in deep brown lines with the sub-signification of Blake's *Marginalia*. \* \* \* At the inner end of this hall of power there should be a marble statue of Blake,

‘His looks commercing with the skies,  
His rapt soul sitting in his eyes.’

He should be standing on a rock, its solid strength overlapped by pale, marmoreal flames, while below his feet twined gently the ‘Serpent of Eternity.’ \* \* \*

We shall attempt no final summary of Blake's powers and position as an artist. To pay some small tribute to his memory from whom, for many years, we have received such unbounded delight and instruction, has been a growing wish ; and, in our humble measure, we have been able, now, to carry it into effect.

He stands, and must always stand, eminently alone. The fountain of thought and knowledge to others, he could never be the head of a school. What is best in him is wholly inimitable. ‘The fire of God was in him.’ And as, all through his works, this subtle element plays and penetrates, so in all he did and said, the ethereal force flamed outward, warming all who knew how to use it aright, scorching or scathing all who come impertinently near to it. He can never be popular in the ordinary sense of the word, write we never so many songs in his praise, simply because the region in which he lived was remote from the common concerns of life, and still more by reason of the truth of the ‘mystic sentence’ uttered by his own lips, and once before cited in these pages—

‘Nor is it possible to thought  
A greater than itself to know.’



# FRANCIS OLIVER FINCH.

## IN MEMORIAM.

*Printed as a Note in First Edition, Vol. I. p. 298.*

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[*Mr. Finch, the reader will remember, was one of the young disciples much with Blake in his last days, from whom interesting reminiscences were gleaned.*]

ON the twenty-seventh of August, 1862, the old Society of Painters in Water-Colours lost, in Mr. Finch, one of their earliest members, who had long enjoyed, in the highest degree, their confidence and esteem, and the warm affection of such as had the pleasure of knowing him intimately. He was the last representative of the old school of landscape-painting in water-colours—a school which had given pleasure to the public for half a century, and contributed to obtain for Englishmen, in that department of art, an European reputation.

When he left school he was articled as a pupil to Mr. John Varley, from whose studio came also two of our most eminent living artists, one of whom has engraved, *con amore*, Varley's *Burial of Saul*; and from such a work we may estimate the value of his influence and instruction. It led to the study of refined models, and pointed to sentiment as the aim of art. It will, probably, be acknowledged that the aim was essentially right, and that, if the old school did not

arrest and detain the eye by intricate imitation, yet that it was massive and manly, and that its tendency was to elevate and refine. It is difficult to call to mind a single work by Mr. Finch that did not suggest happy and beautiful lands, where the poet would love to muse: the moonlit glade, the pastoral slope, the rocky stream, the stately terrace, and mouldering villas or casements opening on the foam—

‘Of perilous seas in fairy lands forlorn.’

How the Society estimated his works was shown by their occupying some of the most conspicuous places on the walls.

He had imagination, that inner sense which receives impressions of beauty as simply and surely as we smell the sweetness of the rose and woodbine. When a boy he chanced to light on the poetry of Keats, and a plaster-figure maker, seeing him hang with longing eye over a cast of the poet's head which lay in his shop, made him a present of it, and he bore it home in triumph. At this time Keats was known to the public only by the ridicule of a critique.

Those who were intimate with Mr. Finch will find it difficult to name a man more evenly and usefully accomplished. Besides modern languages and scientific acquisitions, he had large general knowledge. His conversation was never obtrusive, and it never flagged: it was solemn, playful or instructive, always at the right time and in the right place. An eminent friend, a sagacious observer of men, said that he never thought a friendly dinner-party complete unless Finch were at the table: ‘It was like forgetting the bread.’

He had read much, and was familiar with the great poets and satirists; knew the philosophy of the mind, and had observed men and manners. Of those departments of knowledge which lay apart, his good sense enabled him to take, at least, the relative dimensions. Knowledge apprehends things in themselves; wisdom sees them in their relations. He taught his young friends that goodness was better even

than wisdom, and the philosophy which is conversant with the unseen than any ingenuities of technical science. He said he thought we ought not to claim a monopoly of wisdom because we had discovered that steam would turn a wheel.

It is difficult to convey a notion of his musical genius, because the skill of amateurs, after all the time which is lavished to acquire it, so seldom amounts to more than the doing indifferently what professors do well ; but it was not so with him : it seemed to be his natural language—an expression of that melody within, which is more charming than any modulation of strings or voices. The writer has felt more pleasure in sitting by his pianoforte, listening to fragments of Tallis, Croft, or Purcell, with the interlude, perhaps, of an Irish melody, than from many displays of concerted music. To music his friend resorted at the right time—after his temperate dinner, as Milton directs in his ‘Tractate.’

Nor was his pen unused, and he could use it well. ‘His endeavour,’ says one who knew him best, ‘to benefit his young friends will be long and affectionately remembered, nor is it probable that those of maturer age will easily forget his gentle influence and wise counsel.’

Of his social and moral excellence it is difficult to speak in so short a notice, for the heart overflows with memories of his active kindness, and the skill is lacking to condense a life into a paragraph.

In all the domestic relations, he was exemplary ; throughout his single and married life his good mother never left his house but for her grave, to which the unremitting kindness of her new relative had smoothed the passage. He did not work alone ; were another resting by his side, it might be told that, with one will and purpose, there were two hearts equally busy in ‘devising liberal things.’ His hospitality was not adjusted to his interest, nor his table spread for those who could repay beef with venison ; but for old friends who were in the shade ; for merit and virtue in distress or exile ; for



pale faces which brought the recommendation of sorrow. Let us bear with his simplicity. Perhaps when *he* 'made a feast,' he consulted a very old-fashioned BOOK as to the selection of his guests.

The writer willingly incurs the ridicule of those who believe goodness to be only a refined selfishness, when he looks back, as far as boyhood, to recall some single piece of slight or rudeness, some hard unkindness or cold neglect, some evil influence or moral flaw in his old friend's character, and cannot find it. Were there many such, sarcasm might break her shafts.

Our great satirist said that, if his wide experience had shown him twelve men like Arbuthnot, he never would have written the 'Travels.'

A symmetrical soul is a thing very beautiful and very rare. Who does not find about him and within him grotesque mixtures, or unbalanced faculties, or inconsistent desires; the understanding and the will at feud, the very will in vacillation; opinions shifting with the mode, and smaller impertinences which he forgives, if they are not his own, for the amusement they afford him?

Let those who knew Francis Finch be thankful; they have seen a disciplined and a just man — 'a city, at unity with itself.'

SAMUEL PALMER.

MEMOIR  
OF  
ALEXANDER GILCHRIST.



# MEMOIR

## OF

### ALEXANDER GILCHRIST.

SEVENTEEN years have elapsed since the *Life of Blake* first came before the public; nineteen since its author laid down the pen never again to resume it. During the interval this sole product of his mature powers, which was greeted on its first appearance with a cordial welcome from those whose praise would have been most dear to him, but made way slowly with the general public, has steadily increased in reputation. Whilst his children have been growing up to manhood and womanhood, this fruit of his brain has taken root and thriven in a sunny, if somewhat secluded, nook of the garden of literature. If, then, I could briefly sketch a faithful portrait of Blake's biographer, the attempt would need no apology; for if the work be of interest, so is the worker. A biographer necessarily offers himself as the mirror in which his hero is reflected; and we judge all the better of the truth and adequacy of the image by a closer acquaintance with the medium through which it comes to us.

Alexander Gilchrist, youngest but one of seven children, was born at Newington Green on the 25th of April, 1828, a few months after Blake's death. His father, James Gilchrist, though early lost to him, remained through life an object of such tender love and veneration as few fathers have the happiness of becoming to their children; so that it is hardly

possible to separate the story of the child's life and development from some hasty delineation of that father's character. James, born in 1783, was the posthumous son of a farmer at Larbert near Falkirk. By nature studious, his active inquiring mind proved fertile soil to those seeds of knowledge which are scattered with a somewhat more liberal hand in the village schools of Scotland than of England. Larbert also supplied the boy with friends it would not have been easy to better in a city. There was Willie the *Norelin* (quaintly shrewd), a journeyman carpenter who had served his apprenticeship in Peterhead, and worked in all the principal towns in Scotland for the sake of *insight*, as he called it. He was given to the study of Physics, lent the boy philosophical books and, by his serious, earnest, upright character, exercised on him an influence for good that proved lasting. There was old Sanders the weaver, 'who liked anything better than weaving,' and mounted the treadles as reluctantly as if he were going to the scaffold; but could wrench out a tooth, broach a vein, splice a bone, define the qualities of herbs, make shuttles, fiddles, cuckoo-clocks, prune trees, shave; above all, on Saturday night, when his tongue went faster than his razor; could tell marvellous tales from old books of travel (Shaw, Bruce, Lithgow), from memoirs, histories; was great in legendary lore—the deeds of William Wallace, the Græme, Robert Bruce; the wonders of the vanished city of Camelon, with gates of brass, which had stood on that very spot in the days of the Romans. Yet with a curious admixture of shrewdness and scepticism would old Sanders, in his private talk, slyly hint suspicion of his own wonders, that plunged his young listener from sunny dreams into a chill, comfortless, wintry atmosphere; not without wholesome results either, to one who grew up an ardent truth-seeker. There was, besides, a day-labourer who had never been to school, and owned no books, yet had an acuteness of observation, an insatiable thirst for knowledge, that triumphed over all obstacles. He

had contrived to store his mind with a vast miscellany of facts; could sketch the map of any country and its inhabitants in characteristic garb and features, every beast, bird, and fish, from the elephant to the mouse, the ostrich to the wren, the whale to the minnow. He had moreover mechanical genius, and was always busy on some new invention, except when compelled by want to return to the spade and mattock. And, last, there was a stone-mason, a solitary, contemplative man, an enthusiastic lover of the poets, through whom the lad made his first acquaintance with Milton and Burns.

At his own earnest entreaty James Gilchrist was enabled, by the help of a cousin, to go to Edinburgh University. In a little book called *The Intellectual Patrimony*, published in 1817, containing some interesting autobiographic touches, upon which I have already drawn, there occurs a characteristic reminiscence of this his first journey:—‘When I was yet very young I received instructions and counsel from a poor stranger, which have been fresh in my recollection almost every day of my life for more than twenty years. The tender sensibility of my mind, under the strong impulse of pathetic circumstances, probably rendered the wisdom of the rustic sage more striking and impressive. I was on my first long journey out into the wide world. I had left my tender mother in tears of affection; I had often turned back to hear once more the stream of the Carron murmuring by the tombs of my fathers, and had ascended every eminence that promised another sight of Torwood and the Ochils; and when I should have been provided with lodgings in Edinburgh I was still a solitary wanderer, at dusky eve, on the lonesome road leading from Linlithgow. Here I was overtaken by a little, mean-looking old Highlandman, who soon drew from me my thoughts and feelings, and then began to give me instruction and counsel in words so vigorous and quaint, that I never wholly lost the remembrance of them. Yet the direct influence of his discourse, was perhaps the least benefit which it communicated; the respect it

‘inspired for wisdom was its greatest influence. I have ‘always thought of the little mean-looking old man as ‘standing high in the rank of being, and have felt persuaded ‘that it would be impossible for external circumstances to ‘prevent me from rising, if I chose, to true intellectual and ‘moral dignity.’ After completing his course at Edinburgh, James entered the ministry as a member of the sect of General Baptists, an offshoot of the Presbyterian Church ; was sent out on a mission to preach in England, travelling through Cumberland, Westmorland, Lancashire, Shropshire, and Staffordshire ; preached a while in Birmingham, then for three years in the beautiful little village of Melbourn in Derbyshire : made a happy marriage and finally settled down at Newington Green. During these various ministrations his mind had travelled no less restlessly than his body, questioning, doubting ; now tending to Unitarianism, now drawing back from it ; now busy with the ‘fathomless speculations of theological metaphysics,’ now taking refuge from these in a philosophical examination of language, which resulted in an attempt to found a system of rational philology. Although his labours in this direction—undertaken as they were before the study of Sanskrit had revolutionised the methods and results of philological research in England (though not before German scholars had already seized the clue)—have no permanent value, they display much philosophical acumen, a vigorous grasp of the problems in question, and a trenchant way of demolishing some of the ingenious errors then flourishing as newly discovered truth ;—such as the northern origin of language as set forth by Horne Tooke ; of whom, however, he was, in the main, a warm admirer. It was, in truth, the desire to ‘dig deep into the reasons and qualities of things’ that set James Gilchrist upon the preliminary task of scrutinising his tools, convinced ‘that the alchemy of a fancifully uncertain etymology’ such as then prevailed ‘might ‘be transmuted into the chemistry of a rational philology ‘. . . which would not only facilitate the acquirement of

‘languages, ancient and modern, but purify and enlighten the intellectual atmosphere, furnish an antidote to the ‘poison of metaphysical subtlety, and prevent words from ‘imposing upon us “or flying back like Tartar’s bows and ‘mightily entangling the understanding ;” and last, not least, ‘convert bewildered and bewildering Aristotelian philosophy into useful mechanics or harmless gentlemen.’ His views were set forth in two pamphlets entitled, *Reason the True Arbiter of Language*, and *The Labyrinth Demolished, or the Pioneer of Rational Philology*, published in 1815 ; and he then entered on the formidable task of carrying out his principles in a new Dictionary of the English language, or *Etymologic Interpreter*, with an *Introduction* ‘containing a full development of the Principles of Etymology and Grammar.’ This *Introduction* was published separately as a precursor of the *Dictionary* in 1824. I will venture to give one brief extract, both as a taste of the writer’s quality, and because it contains, as a friend well qualified to judge assures me, a clear anticipation of the doctrine of relativity, since developed at large by Professor Bain. ‘As almost every expression (if there be any exception) is ‘elliptical ; so with ‘almost every word (if here also any exception exist) there ‘are several ideas associated in the mind of those who employ ‘it, besides the individual idea which it was employed to ‘indicate. The reason of this is too obvious to require any ‘metaphysical abstrusity of theory or of explication. There ‘is no such *entity* in either the natural or moral, physical or ‘metaphysical world, as ‘disconnected individuality. There ‘is not any one single entity, be it an object of our senses, a ‘sensation, an idea, a preception, a notion, or whatever you ‘may choose to call it, which can exist alone or in absolute ‘solitude, and separation from company. However much, therefore, it may be intended as the sole or exclusive object or ‘indication of any verbal sign, or of any contrivance whatever, it is, after all, but one of a flock or group : it may be ‘the first or largest of the flock, it may be the most



‘prominent or most distinguished figure in the group ; it  
‘may occupy the foreground in the representation, but it  
‘is always accompanied by a number of other entities.  
‘Hence what is called the principle of mental association,  
‘so liberally philosophised since the days of that original,  
‘acute, and profound thinker, that consistent reasoner, that  
‘masterly writer but ill-requited author, the Philosopher of  
‘Malmesbury ; for the poorest of those who have borrowed  
‘from him have liberally repaid the obligation by kicking  
‘at his reputation : and even the simple-minded Mr. Locke  
‘only mentions his writings to say that they are justly ex-  
‘ploded. Such is the timidity or ingratitude of the disciple  
‘who is, in this, as in so many other respects, a perfect con-  
‘trast to his great master, the teacher and founder of that  
‘philosophy of which he was an unworthy apostle.’ Spite of  
James Gilchrist’s nationality he also girds at the Scottish  
metaphysicians with vehemence, especially at Dugald Stewart,  
whom he alludes to as the ‘visionary metaphysicling.’

These pamphlets were, unfortunately, printed at the writer’s  
own cost, and published by himself ; in other words, not  
published at all. They never, therefore, reached the eye of  
the public, though they attracted the favourable notice of a  
few scholars (notably of Dr. Gilchrist) and obtained for their  
author employment on the *Encyclopædia Britannica*. Amid  
these labours, his mind continued still agitated by religious  
questions. Repelled, on the one hand, by the narrowness and  
ignorance of the orthodox sects and, on the other, by what he  
regarded as the specious intellectuality and illogical com-  
promises of the Unitarians ; disciplined by the incisive and  
fearless intellect of Hobbes, whom, as a philosopher, he  
admired and honoured above all men save Bacon, yet him-  
self permeated through and through with the religious earnest-  
ness, nay, the religious faith, of his Scottish Puritan ancestors  
—he found no peace nor rest till he came to the firm and final  
determination to renounce the ministry altogether, since he  
could only please and satisfy his flock by leading them along

a beaten track reason and conscience refused to tread. But not without a severe mental conflict was this decision arrived at ; a conflict which, added as it was to arduous mental labours, to his duties as a preacher, and as tutor to some private pupils, residing in his house, resulted in an attack of brain-fever that permanently shattered his strength. He rose from the sick bed calm and determined. The storm within was over ; a storm without began. To resign the ministry was to resign the chief means of support for his wife and children, now seven in number ; to lose many warm friends ; to be bitterly assailed by kith and kin, whose notions of worldly prudence and sectarian bigotry were alike outraged by his decision. But, put what you might into the other scale, James Gilchrist's was not the kind of conscience to kick the beam ; nor happily was his wife one to shrink from or murmur at the consequences which might ensue, though she herself remained a staunch Unitarian. He had an eye for the intrinsic, and knew that a man's self-respect is an indispensable possession which to part with is to become poor and abject amid what wealth or splendour of environment soever. It was, indeed, no question of wealth or splendour for him, but the more serious and urgent one of the necessary means of subsistence. The home in Newington Green was exchanged for a cottage in the beautiful village of Mapledurham, near Reading, where, on a bend of the Thames, quite secluded and embowered by trees, stands an old water-mill (a favourite with our landscape painters), which James Gilchrist rented. The little son, Alexander, was then a year old ; and here he spent a happy childhood, all unconscious that, amid that tranquil routine of country life, another storm was gathering which was to hasten to a premature close his father's days. Almost as soon as he could walk he became that father's constant companion, the span of years between them bridged by the remarkable gift of sympathetic insight, springing from a great power of loving, which dawned early in the child, grew from day to day, and was hereafter to prove a main

source of his strength as critic and biographer. Hand in hand they stood, watching the work go on in the cheerful, busy, old mill, amid the clank and throb of machinery, the sound of the rushing water over the great wheel, the clean and pleasant smell of the flour, thickly powdering wall and floor-miller and men to match. Or they wandered along the riverside and through the noble beechwoods that crown the surrounding heights, the father musing, the child enjoying ; or took the footpath across the grounds of Mapledurham House, seat of the Blounts, where Pope was once a frequent guest. Those were stirring times in politics (1828—36) ; and James Gilchrist was, needless to say, an ardent sympathiser with the cause of reform and progress. Many a time, pausing in these walks, did he have discussion, long and lively, on public affairs with the rector of the parish, Lord Augustus Fitzclarence, son of William IV. and Mrs. Jordan,—a kindly, liberal-minded man, who, perhaps, found in the conversation of the thoughtful, scholarly miller an unexpected and piquant enlivenment of his duties towards a rustic flock.

As to education little Alexander was under a mild *régime*, unlike that to which his elder brothers had been subjected. For them had been devised new methods of learning to read, to spell, to attack the difficulties of the Latin grammar, based on the philosophical study of language. But the results had been far from encouraging. Whether the pupils were to book-learning especially averse, or the standard of time and attention were fixed too high, or too sternly enforced by the earnest, high-strung, sometimes irritable, father ; or whether the new system were better in theory than in practice, the progress made was small and the disgust to study great in both the elder brothers. So the youngest was suffered to travel along the beaten track, under the gentle guidance of an elder sister, and the intercourse between father and son was unclouded and wholly pleasurable. On the young child's soul the father's image impressed itself, for life, as an ideal embodiment of sweetness and dignity of character ; and their

intercourse, especially the silent outdoor companionship, made his childhood seem to him a poem of which the joyous beauty was enhanced by contrast with the time of sorrow and darkness that immediately followed.

It was hardly possible for James Gilchrist, now in middle life, with the fixed habits and abstracted nature of a scholar, and with that shrinking alike from business ways and business men which follows from having other aims and other standards of judgment, to adapt himself with any measure of success to the new occupation. He had entered on it against his own wishes and judgment, in deference to the advice of indignant relatives, to whom the abandonment of a good income for conscience' sake appeared mere fatuity; anxious to repair by any means, however repugnant, the injury he had been compelled to inflict on the pecuniary interests of those dear to him; prone also, perhaps, as conscientious natures often are, to believe that what is most distasteful must therefore be most right to do. But he had failed to realise, with sufficient force, that training and experience are necessary to success in business. Gradually the entire control of the buying and selling, if not of the mill itself, fell into young and irresponsible hands, and the final disaster was not long in coming. Failure to so proud and honourable a nature was synonymous with disgrace. The blow struck him down and made him desire death. Undermined as his strength had been by the previous severe illness, death easily obeyed his wishes. A nameless kind of malady, a wasting of health and strength without apparent physical cause, laid James Gilchrist in the grave at the age of 52. Thus, looking back in maturer years, was added a peculiar tenderness to the son's sorrow and affection for his father, as for one who had aimed high, striven hard, lived blamelessly, yet, in his prime, been whelmed in troubled waters he had no power to stem. And thus was developed that strong sympathy with the unvictorious fighters in the battle of life, which was a marked characteristic of Alexander Gilchrist.

The grief and speedy death of the beloved father, the anxious sorrowful faces of the mother and elder children, the straitened means and hurried return to London,—dreariest of places under such conditions,—combined to make a swift and sharp transition from light to dark in the child's life, which left indelible traces. But courage, mutual helpfulness, a strong bond of family affection, and, in most of the children, an unquenchable love of intellectual pursuits, prevailed against the darkness soon, though their path continued steep and rugged.

At the age of twelve Alexander was sent to London University College school, where, for four years, he was a diligent and very quiet scholar ; frequenting the play-ground little, if at all, liking his work and his teachers well, liked by them, winning a fair share of prizes, and eagerly availing himself of all the opportunities offered to quench his thirst for knowledge. This, too, was always looked back upon as a happy time : and not least of the pleasant memories connected with it was that of the afternoon saunter home across the Regent's Park in spring, with a volume of Wordsworth or Shelley for companion—first readings in the poets which, to one who had himself a poet's heart, if not a poet's gift of utterance, made a spring-time within as full of fresh beauty as nature's own.

Now, too, was formed a friendship with two brothers which remained, to the end, one of the most precious gifts life had in store. The elder of these, some ten years older than himself, combined with a riper judgment and a close similarity of tastes, rare endowments which—had they not impelled him with equal force toward literature and art, and been unsustained by the self-reliant energy needful to counterbalance that unproductive fastidiousness which sometimes results from an exquisite fineness of perception (for every man has to begin with comparative, if not absolute, failures)—might have achieved enduring work in either field. In his friends' home Alexander spent his happiest hours, all members of the family welcoming him with affectionate cordiality. And when the two were separated by distance, letters which

made the mental gains and experiences of the one the gains of the other, were exchanged with a faithful regularity which continued to the end. An unread letter, waiting for the better moment that never came, was under the death-bed pillow of the one whose life-journey was soonest ended.

On leaving school, at the age of sixteen, Alexander applied himself with energy to the study of Jurisprudence, with a view to being called to the Bar, and entered as a student of the Middle Temple in 1846, continuing two years longer to prepare himself for practice assiduously. The law was not a repulsive or uninteresting pursuit to him; but the love of literature strengthened with his strength till he grew to feel that, to him at least, the most modest literary achievement, provided it were genuine,—something worth doing worthily done,—was more to be desired than brilliant legal success: and when he was called to the Bar in 1849 he donned the wig and gown for the last as well as the first time, thenceforward devoting himself wholly to literary work. \*The usual, indeed more than the usual, share of disappointments and delays, refusals and curtailments from the hands of editors fell to his share. The very earnestness and conscientious thoroughness of his bent seemed to overweight him in the race, and that which was his strength—though strength that had not yet learned to put itself forth victoriously—made him labour along slowly, whilst shallower but more agile writers, with aims easier of attainment, shot on before. He desired always to treat his subject exhaustively; as a critic to enter into close companionship with his author or painter; to stand hand in hand with him, seeing the same horizon, listening, pondering, absorbing. No subtlest shade of meaning, no shifting hue of beauty should escape him or his reader if he could help it. Hence the difficulty of obtaining concentration; of making due sacrifice of detail to the force of the whole. Hence, at first, a thicket of adjectives in labyrinthine sentences. But the reader who persevered through these discouragements, found himself in company with a large and generous mind, of fine perceptions

and strong convictions ; bent wholly on communicating the warmth of his admiration for the work of genius in question ; careless of himself, incapable of those airs of superiority to which critics are prone. Like his father he was a good hater in a literary, not in a personal, sense. For bad or meretricious work, for false sentiment or for philistinism he expressed his scorn with sufficient point and fervour.

Dr. Price, then editor of the *Eclectic Review*, was the first to recognise that the young critic deserved a hearing, and to open to him the doors of that *Review*. In its pages appeared all he wrote for three or four years :—criticisms of the poets ; reviews of books on art ; and notices of picture exhibitions. Many were the days spent in the National Gallery, Hampton Court, the Dulwich Gallery ; in Westminster Abbey, or in country rambles which had for their goal some old church, every stone of which was scanned till it yielded up its quota of the history, as well as of the meaning and beauty of the whole. This was a time when the lovers of Gothic architecture yet believed in Restoration, little suspecting it was to prove the most insidious and deadly form of destruction ; and articles were now and then devoted to archæological topics and the doings of the restorers.

The first little gleam of recognition which came was the republication, in pamphlet form, by Cundall of an article on Etty, which appeared in the *Eclectic* in 1849 ; and, resulting from this, the further good fortune of a commission from David Bogue to write the *Life of Etty*. With this brightening of the horizon marriage seemed not too imprudent ; and having found, some three years before, the woman of his choice, they were married at Earls Colne in February 1851, he being then not quite twenty-three. After devoting part of the spring to an article on the Great Exhibition from the Decorative Art point of view,—a subject on which he had already written at length in Chambers's *Papers for the People*, we went into Yorkshire, Etty's native county, to collect materials for the *Life* ; which took us into some curious old-world nooks and

corners, and among people with a fresh flavour of their native soil about them. The following winter was spent within sight and sound of the sea, at Lyme Regis, in battling manfully with the plethora of material collected,—letters, diaries, quality in inverse proportion to quantity,—out of which the *Life* was to be constructed : an arduous and discouraging task. But a hearty admiration for Etty as a painter, and a genuine liking for his solid, simple character, carried the biographer cheerfully, though slowly, forward, and in 1855 the *Life of Etty* appeared. His rewards were the consciousness of having done an honest piece of work ; and the following letter from Mr. Carlyle, opened, as how well I remember, with eager haste, and read with a glow of pleasure that made past toils seem light and the future full of hope :—

‘DEAR SIR,

‘*Chelsea*, 30 Jan. 1855.

‘I have received your *Life of Etty* ; and am surely much obliged by your kind gift and by the kind sentiments you express towards me. I read, last night, in the book, with unusual satisfaction : a book done in a vigorous, sympathetic, veracious spirit, and promising me the delineation, actual and intelligible, of a man extremely well worth knowing. Beyond doubt I shall finish steadily what I have begun, and small thanks to me in this instance. Etty’s name was, naturally, familiar to me, but his physiognomy of body and mind, and his great merits as painter and man, were a mere rumour to me hitherto.

‘I believe I may congratulate you on accomplishing a good work, of its kind, among your fellow creatures ; and it is a real favour to me that I have the opportunity of enjoying myself over it and instructing myself by it.

‘I wish you all good speed in your enterprises ; and solicit a continuance of your good will towards me.

‘I am, with many thanks and regards,

‘Yours sincerely,

‘T. CARLYLE.’



The press was either silent or adverse. The York papers, specially interested in the matter, not for artistic but for local reasons,—Etty having been born in York and ended his days there as a wealthy citizen,—were aggrieved at the author's disparaging comparison of the past grandeurs of their city with its present condition ; and, in one journal, an indignant peroration wound up with the scathing inquiry, 'Does he ignore our manufacture of combs?'

The next task was also a commission from Bogue, who was about to issue a new edition of *Men of the Time*, and committed to Etty's biographer the writing of the short notices of artists to be included. This done, and the public seeming little disposed to interest itself in Etty, my husband chose, for once, a subject with reference not to his own tastes but to what seemed likely to prove of wider general interest, and began a *Life of the Earl of Dundonnald*. Notwithstanding a sincere admiration for that brave, able, ill-used man, the enterprise was uncongenial, and relinquished without regret when it came to light that the Earl was preparing an autobiography.

But life is not all work. Besides the pleasures of domestic life, always very dear to him of whom I write, there was the simple yet sufficing one of long, often solitary, rambles over the beautiful hills around Guildford, in which cheerful, picturesque town we had settled in 1853. Our roomy old, gabled, weather-tiled house, standing a little back from the high road, was a home after his own heart. It seemed to have a particularly comfortable, sleepy way of basking in the sun, as a thing it had been used to do on summer afternoons for two or three centuries ; but in rough weather it was like a ship at sea, so did the winds, from whatever quarter, buffet it, and surge along the hollows of its many-gabled roof. In the hall, which was the largest room, stood a long oak table, lustrous with age and the polishings of many hands, which must have been made in the house to remain there till both should crumble, for at no door nor

window could it have been got in or out ; and with it were the high oaken stools on which less luxurious generations had sat at meat. There was a great open fireplace with niched seats in the chimney corner where to rest with a friend over the glowing, fragrant logs when stiff and chill, but in happiest mood, after a twenty-mile walk, was an enjoyment that made a man 'o'er all the ills of life victorious.' Often the friend was Walter White, than whom no man knows better how to enjoy, and to make his readers enjoy, such a tramp and such a rest.

Meanwhile there was good work, thoroughly congenial work, in view. Allan Cunningham's sketch in *Lives of the Painters* and the well-known illustrations to Blair's *Grave* were, up to this time, all the acquaintance my husband had with Blake. But, in a visit to London, he now came upon some Designs, and upon the *Illustrations of the Book of Job*, which filled him with enthusiasm ; and his mind was quickly made up to the task of gathering together as complete a record of Blake's life and works as was yet possible. This and other literary plans made removal to London desirable, and in the course of a visit to Mr. Carlyle the idea was mooted of our taking a house next door to him. Soon afterwards Mr. Carlyle wrote, 'I dare not advise anybody 'into a house (almost as dangerous as advising him to a wife, 'except that divorce is easier) ; . . . but if heaven should 'please to rain you accidentally into that house I should 'esteem it a kindness.' And heaven did rain us down there, much to our satisfaction, in the autumn of 1856. The opportunity thus afforded for intercourse with one whose works my husband always regarded as the noblest influence of his time, and especially for occasional companionship in long afternoon and night walks, was keenly prized. We had been settled at Chelsea only a few months when a domestic sorrow,—the accidental drowning of a much-loved elder brother,—came upon him. The two succeeding years had to be wholly devoted to the harassing task of winding up

large and complicated business affairs, left in disorder by this sudden death. That done; Alexander turned, with renewed delight, back to literary work, carrying on the *Blake* towards completion; and contributing, first to the *Literary Gazette* and then to the *Critic* (both papers since defunct), some weekly columns of art criticism and notices of books on art. To this he applied himself with no little zest at first, for his interest in every department of the subject was fresh and hearty, and his desire to speed the true as against the meretricious, strong. Notices of picture exhibitions did, at last, become a weariness; the conscientious thoroughness with which he sought that no genuine merit, of however modest a kind, should escape him, and to this end the huge multitude of pictures to be carefully examined and remembered; the large proportion that were of little worth; the distracted hunt for adjectives with some freshness of flavour in them wherewith to characterise the admirable or the contemptible,—made the task laborious far beyond what its pecuniary reward, or, as he began to think latterly, its intrinsic usefulness justified; and he longed to relinquish it for more fruitful work in his chosen field of biography. Many were the projects to be realised after the *Blake*. For a life of Wordsworth he had already begun to make preparation: and lighter enterprises were to come in between whiles. Countess D'Aulnois, whose sprightly genius has been a good fairy of the nursery for a couple of hundred years, Lord Herbert of Cherbury, Sir Kenelm Digby, old Howell (first and most respectable of book-makers)—of these, and many another, it was my husband's cherished hope to revive the faded and forgotten lineaments: to create a small gallery of portraits in which the lover of literature should linger with as curious an interest as does the antiquary amid the relics of the external life of the past. But it was not to be. Life was opening out fair prospects around; the steepest pitch of the hill was climbed; men of rare genius, among them the poet-artist, Dante Gabriel and his brother William Rossetti,

Ford Madox Brown, and others, were stretching out to him the hand of friendship. His own words,—a sonnet,—call it rather a solemn prophetic flash, which came to him in a long solitary walk over Hindhead a few years before, sums all up:—

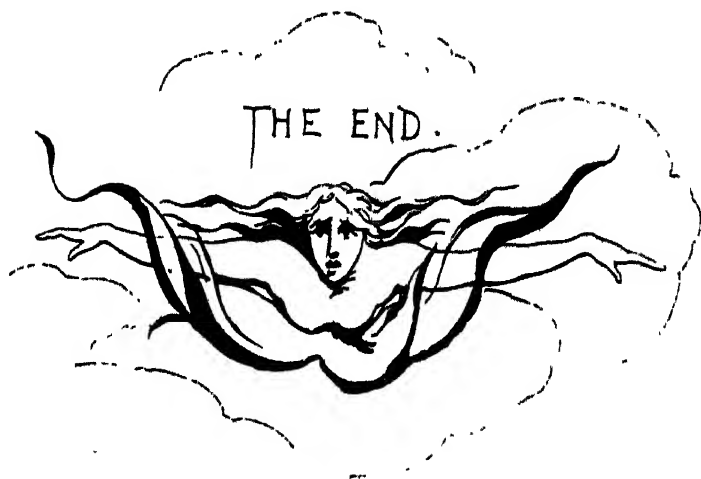
, LIFE.

On eager feet, his heritage to seize,  
 A traveller speeds towards the promised land;  
 Afar gloom purple slopes on either hand;  
 Glad earth is fragrant with the flowering lees;  
 The green corn stirs in noon's hot slumberous breeze,  
 And whispering woodlands nigh make answer grand.  
 That pilgrim's heart, as by a magic wand,  
 Is swayed: nor, as he gains each height, and sees  
 A gleaming landscape still and still afar,  
 Doth Hope abate, nor less a glowing breath  
 Wake subtle tones from viewless strings within.  
 But lo! upon his path new aspects win:  
 Dun sky above, brown wastes around him are;  
 From yon horizon dim stalks spectral Death!

GUILDFORD, *June*, 1856.

In the autumn of 1861 our eldest girl, Beatrice, took scarlet fever of a malignant type. Six weeks after, while she was struggling back to convalescence, our eldest boy and then the father himself sickened with it. All the children battled through, but the father succumbed. The brain was tired with stress of work; the fever burned and devastated like a flaming fire: to four days of delirium succeeded one of exhaustion, of stupor; and then the end; without a word, but not without a look of loving recognition. It was on a wild and stormy night, November 30, 1861, that his spirit took flight. If life be measured not by years, but by what it contains, this life of thirty-three summers was not short. With a sweetness of disposition, a tenderness of heart that gave and took the utmost of happiness in domestic life; a sturdy enjoyment of work; fair, though

not strong, health ; a fineness of perception and an ardent love for all that is genuine or great in literature, in art, in nature, in humanity, and a silent faith in immortality, I think he knew no moments of tedium or *ennui*, though of sorrow, toil, pain and privation he had his share. To such a nature the cup of life is full of fine flavours.



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